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THIS ISSUE 19/03

Stay snug

This issue, our Big Question on page 22 is: 'What advice would you give someone starting out in cycling?' You offer varied and inspirational words of wisdom, to which I would like to add my two pennies' worth.

Wear more clothes, that's what I say, particularly after the large quantity of exposed pink flesh I witnessed at the weekend. Seven days before, we had enjoyed our first glimpse of spring sunshine, which duped many newbie riders into shedding their winter wear a month or more too early. This Sunday it was probably 10°C cooler, with a chilly wind to boot, so not a time to ditch the thermals.

If you start a ride wearing too many clothes, it's never a problem, as you can always remove layers. Too much is always better than too little when it comes to cycling. Jackets tend to have oversized pockets with plenty of room for gloves, headwear, gilets and capes.

Bare legs in winter is a pet hate. Isn't it common sense to wear tights or leg-warmers when you ride, until it's nearly 20°C? Perhaps it's because many new riders come from a running background, where bare legs in winter are a common sight and not a problem.

And don't forget overshoes. Many riders don't discover them until they have endured too many rides with cold, wet feet.

Keep your extremities warm and you'll be a happy, snug cyclist.



Robert Garbutt
Editor

Photos: Chris Catchpole, Rick Robson



Pedal-based
power meters



Knee pain:
in-depth analysis



Insider's guide:
Tour de Yorkshire

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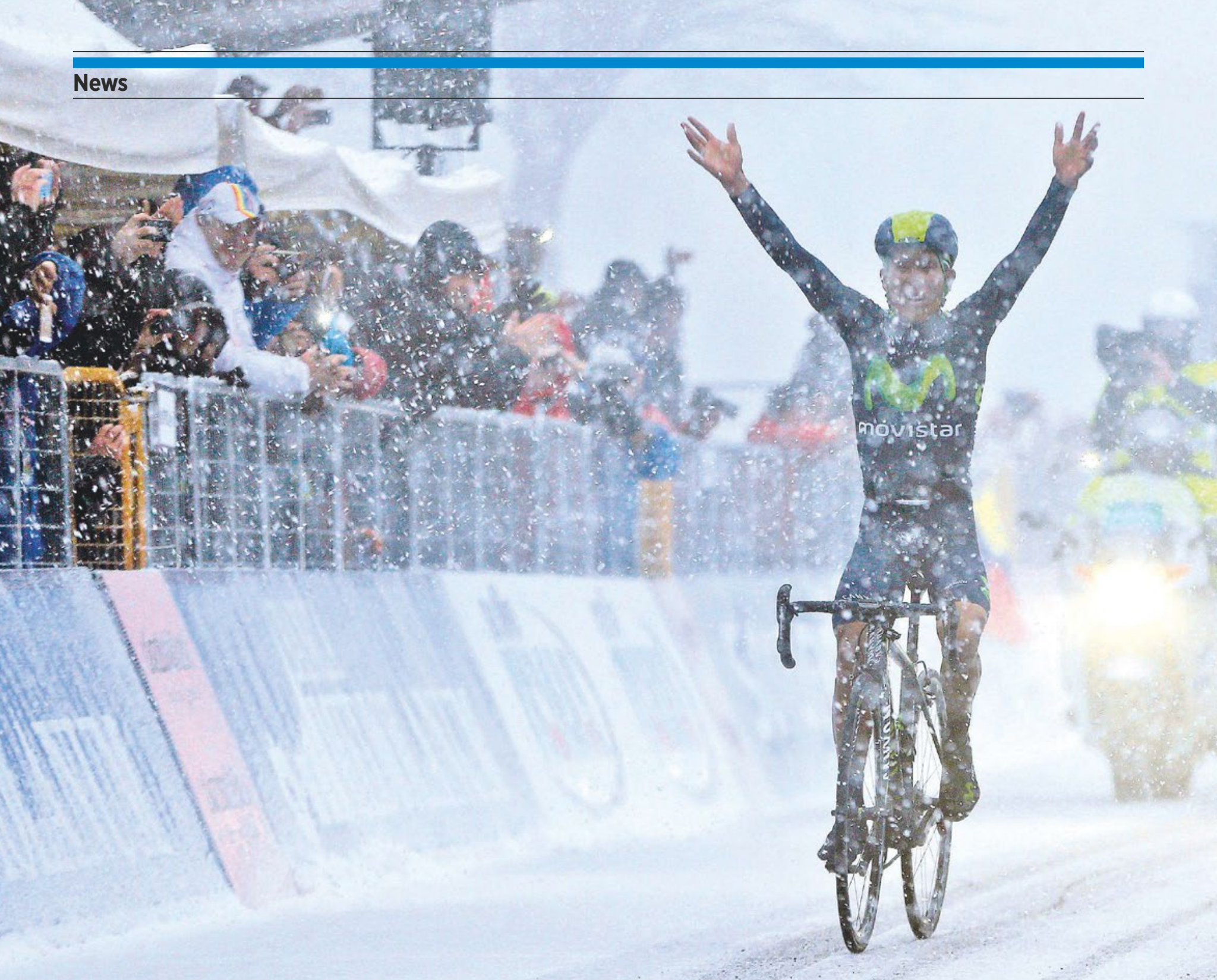
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Quintana takes stage in Tirreno tempest

Colombian rider “over the moon”

Gregor Brown

Riding through driving snow, Colombia's Nairo Quintana (Movistar) dealt a harsh blow to his potential Tour de France rivals when he soloed to victory on the

queen stage of Tirreno-Adriatico in Italy on Sunday.

The 2014 Giro d'Italia winner finished the stage at Monte Terminillo ski resort with nearly a minute in hand on Vuelta winner Alberto Contador (Tinkoff-Saxo) and just over two minutes on 2014

Tour de France champion Vincenzo Nibali (Astana).

“I looked around, I couldn't see anyone else willing or able to attack, so I did it,” the 25-year-old climber said of his attack from a thinning group with five kilometres to go. “Winning my first [European] race of the season, and the way I did, makes

me feel over the moon.”

With the exception of Sky's Chris Froome who didn't start Tirreno due to a chest infection, Quintana's win was taken ahead of nearly all the top Grand Tour contenders. Bauke Mollema (Trek) chased to second place on the stage while Joaquin Rodríguez (Katusha), Rigoberto Uran

Yates stands his ground

Unfazed by the snow and a dressing on his chin after a stage-two spill, Britain's Adam Yates climbed with some of cycling's biggest names to finish in seventh place on the Monte Terminillo stage of Tirreno-Adriatico.

"I can't complain, I'm up there with the best climbers in the world," the 22-year-old told *CW*. "Obviously, though, Quintana knocked the f**k out of us."

While Bauke Mollema also slipped up the road, Yates managed the rest. He responded to the attacks from Alberto Contador and even made one of his own with 2.2km remaining.

"I was feeling good so I tried to chase down Mollema," commented Yates. "Only in the last two or three kilometres did I begin feeling it a bit."

Yates's ride put him into sixth place overall at the start of this week, but he was expecting to lose a few spots in Tuesday's closing time trial stage. "I'm trying to work on my time trial, but some of these guys go pretty quickly."

Britain's Steve Cummings (MTN-Qhubeka) also looked in line for a high finish. The strong time triallist was lying in ninth place overall ahead of the final stage as we went to press.

MY VIEW...

Gregor Brown



CW news writer

Given he'd only returned from Colombia four days earlier, the apparent ease with which Quintana rode clear of cycling's biggest stars showed his strength. Last year he skipped the Tour for the Giro; this year he's already beginning to look like the favourite.

(Etixx-Quick Step), Thibaut Pinot (FDJ) and Domenico Pozzovivo (Ag2r) finished in the same group as Contador.

Extreme conditions

While Nibali refused to comment, Contador expressed disappointment with how he compared:

"Quintana set a very fast

rhythm, and I couldn't close him down," said Contador. "I am not going to make any excuses. I was hoping for better."

While Quintana finished the stage with the road surface still visible through tyre tracks, the back-markers finished in heavier snow. As he

did in the Tour of Oman — when heat stopped play — Fabian Cancellara voiced his objection to officials allowing the race to continue in such extreme conditions — as did Filippo Pozzato. Sport stakeholders are due to meet this Friday to discuss their extreme weather protocol.

Sky continues stage race domination

Richie Porte wins Paris-Nice as Geraint Thomas finishes fifth

Kenny Pryde

Richie Porte (right) maintained Team Sky's impressive run of spring wins with two stages and the overall classification in the rather ironically titled 'Race to the Sun', which saw riders face increasingly cold and wet conditions the nearer they got to Nice.

Keeping out of trouble in the flat sprint days and then coming to the fore on the two key hilly stages — Porte and Geraint Thomas took an impressive one-two on stage four — Sky effectively delivered Porte to the start ramp of the final stage time trial up the Col d'Eze in a position to win, which he duly did.

It wasn't quite Sky shutting down the race and asphyxiating the opposition on the mountain stages — far from it. In fact, the race almost slipped away from them on an epic penultimate stage between Vence and Nice, where both Porte and Thomas crashed on a damp descent after distancing then leader Michal Kwiatkowski. Porte later alluded to over-inflated tyres rather than the tyre brand or tread.

Managed by Nico Portal, Sky had kept their collective heads on the tough stage to Nice as they came under pressure from Etixx-Quick

Step. No other team on the race looked willing or able to lay its GC cards on the table so confidently.

Lotto's Tony Gallopin was wearing the yellow jersey and was last man off in the final nine-kilometre time trial up Col D'Eze, but not even he expected to hold on to his 36-second lead. And so it proved.

Porte, on the other hand looked like a machine on the Col d'Eze, rock solid on his road bike and aero clip-ons, winning the stage by 13 seconds from Katusha's Simon Spilak.

"This year I felt a bit of pressure; I realised at the start I could win," Porte told *CW*. "The final stage was stressful, but I think I rode a good time trial."

Top of the WorldTour Geraint Thomas couldn't hold on to his podium position in the final TT, and was overtaken on time by Spilak and Rui Costa who finished third and fourth on GC respectively. Along with Kwiatkowski in second place, all three were 30 seconds down on Porte, with Thomas a further 11 seconds back.

Nevertheless, it was another strong display from Sky that now sees them sit at the top of the WorldTour rankings.

Boonen out of the Classics

Tom Boonen will miss out on the chance of becoming the most decorated Paris-Roubaix rider of all time this April, after breaking his elbow at Paris-Nice.

The 34-year-old, who has four Hell of the North victories alongside Roger De Vlaeminck, touched team-mate Nikolas Maes's wheel at low speed during the race's first road stage last Monday.

The Etixx-Quick Step rider also suffered a grade three AC-joint dislocation in

the crash, and will be out of action for between three to six weeks.

"It was a stupid crash with big consequences," said Boonen. "In two seconds I realised that my Classics season was over. I imagined it differently and I was ready for the Classics. But I can't change what happened and it is something I need to accept."

Boonen last missed Paris-Roubaix in 2013, after crashing out of the Tour of Flanders.



Weekly column **Rob Hayles**



“With Paris-Nice under way, a great photo of four-time winner Sean Kelly with old-school equipment was doing the rounds”

The European season is very busy right now and the competition is hotting up a treat — unlike me every time I step into my new car. I say new; it’s actually 15 years old. But it’s new to me.

Gone are heated leather seats and steering wheel, six-speed Tiptronic gear box and 16-speaker sound system. Only one of the few ways in which my ‘new’ car resembles my old one is that it’s four-wheel drive. Seeing as I live out in the country, it can only be one thing: a Land Rover Defender. That’s pretty much as agricultural as it gets without being an actual tractor.

While Paris-Nice was under way last week there was a great photo doing the rounds on social media from the 1985 edition. It’s a shot of ‘King Kelly’ in the Col d’Eze time trial on his way to a fourth straight overall victory in the Race to the Sun.

One of the things that interested me most about this photo is the equipment that’s being ridden. Kelly is riding standard pedals with clips and leather toe-straps. My fellow commentator was one of the last of the pros to eventually convert to the new era of clipless pedals.

This brings me back to my car. Technology has come on in leaps and bounds over the last 15 years — and cars are pretty close to the forefront in such evolution. Or at least most of them are. Land Rover Defenders however are not. Why get an old one? Well it’s pretty much the same as a brand spanking new one. Just not quite as shiny!

It’s nothing fancy, with few creature comforts. But it does its job very well.

Now, I don’t know what car Sean Kelly drives these days, but I reckon he might approve of my old school, no frills, get-the-job-done Landy. Like me, I imagine he’s probably quite content that apart from clipless pedals, cycling hasn’t gone all electric, digital and self-aware on us...

Eh? What’s that you say? They’ve gone and done what? Oh.

Former double world track champion, Rob Hayles is a pundit for TV and radio. He’s also a coffee connoisseur and garden shed inventor

LAST WEEK

Monday Mar 9

Astana's sprinter Andrea Guardini won his second stage of this year's Tour de Langkawi in Malaysia. The Italian also claimed victory in Wednesday's fourth stage, meaning that 17 of his 31 career wins to date have come in Langkawi. MTN-Qhubeka's Youcef Reguigui took the overall victory.

Tuesday Mar 10

A cyclist was fined £130 at Wimbledon Magistrates Court having been clocked speeding through Richmond Park at 41mph in January. Rory Palmer was spotted by police overtaking cars on Sawyer's Hill. He has resigned from his club, London Dynamo, following the incident.

Wednesday Mar 11

The UCI extended its deal with clothing brand Santini, which has produced the world champion rainbow jerseys since 1994. The sport's governing body penned Santini in until 2017, with the Italian company also equipping cyclists at the World Cycling Centre in Switzerland.

Thursday Mar 12

It was announced that eight of London's most dangerous roads will have speed limits of 20mph as part of a pilot scheme. Transport for London hopes that by reducing the speed limits on busy thoroughfares such King's Cross Road and Farringdon Road, it will reduce the number of pedestrian, cyclist and motorcyclist deaths or injuries by 40 per cent by 2020.

Friday Mar 13

The UCI said it will work to enshrine a "fit and proper" test for team personnel following the CIRC report into the sport's doping and governance problems. The governing body wants a greater say in who can work for leading teams, plans to work more closely with the World Anti-Doping Agency, relaunch its whistleblower programme and encourage night-time testing when it is deemed appropriate.

Saturday Mar 14

Britain's Scott Thwaites (Bora-Argon 18) placed fifth in the Ronde van Drenthe in the Netherlands, having been part of a quintet who contested the finish. Then, after a poorly executed lead-out, the Yorkshireman finished in the same position in Sunday's Dwars door Drenthe.

Sunday Mar 15

Raleigh-GAC's Ian Wilkinson was the best-placed finisher from a British team in the Omloop van het Waasland in Belgium. The 35-year-old came 14th in the race, one place ahead of NFTO's Rob Partridge.

Photo: Russell Ellis



Geoff Thomas stands by Armstrong Tour ride invite

Nick Bull

Former footballer Geoff Thomas has defended his decision to invite Lance Armstrong to take part in his fundraising bike ride, which will see him ride the full 2015 Tour de France route.

Cancer survivor Thomas is aiming to cycle the entire Tour route — one day ahead of the race — and raise £1m for Cure Leukaemia.

Last weekend's *Mail on Sunday* reported that Thomas has invited the disgraced former racer to join him for a couple of stages. Team Sky principal Sir Dave Brailsford was among those who criticised the move, telling the *Times* that the Texan's presence will be a "massive distraction" and that he has "done enough damage to the Tour already".

Speaking to *CW*, however, Thomas stood by his decision. "I knew I'd get a reaction from people who may not have looked too deeply into the story," he said.

"I understand cycling's history, so I'm not naively going into this without thinking long and hard about it. But I think there's a bigger story here; to raise awareness and as much money as we can for this fantastic cause."

Thomas flew to America last month to meet Armstrong, after which the former US Postal rider agreed to take part in the ride.

"When I met Lance, I saw somebody who was frustrated he couldn't work with the Livestrong foundation," added Thomas.

"This is an opportunity to get him back into that realm, and hopefully help him make millions of pounds for charity again."

The exact stages on which Armstrong — who doped his way to seven Tour victories — will accompany Thomas are yet to be decided.

"He's willing to do as much as he can — which is likely no more than two or three days," added Thomas. "He won't be anywhere near the professionals; he won't see the race."

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Insurance can be a minefield, and a lot of people often don't know what cover they've got. This only becomes clear once they need to make a claim, at which point the lack of cover can be costly.

Household insurance just doesn't cut it

Many cyclists do not have adequate insurance cover for the bikes they own or the riding they do. There is a common misperception that 'if my bikes get stolen, I'll claim on my household insurance'. In many cases, this simply isn't true.

Specialist cycle insurance offers the cover and peace of mind that household policies simply can't, and is the best bet when it comes to replacing your bikes and cycle kit in the unfortunate event of theft or an accident.

Recent research has shown that one in three household policies does not cover bikes away from the home. For those with building only insurance, bikes certainly won't be covered at all. Specialist cycle insurance covers you where household insurance won't – when you're riding.

Contents insurance policies can have bikes added, but this will incur an additional cost, which is often more than a cycle insurance policy.

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It's a sad fact that many cyclists at some point will have their pride and joy stolen.

What's more when riding a sportive, accidents can happen: bad road surfaces, some inexperienced riders – if a crash happens it could leave your bike damaged and unusable.

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offered by cycleplan's specialist cycle insurance really comes into its own: if your bike is stolen or damaged beyond repair, and up to three years old, cycleplan will replace it new for old to get you riding again in no time.

Imagine if on your last training ride your locked up bike goes missing from outside the café stop, just days before the sportive you've spent months preparing for. Well, this great feature of the policy alone offers holders the confidence to get out and ride, free from the fear that if their bike went missing they'd have to shell out for a new one themselves, at a cost well above that of the insurance premium, or worse still miss the event and then still have to buy a new bike afterwards.

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In addition to the standard policy, cyclists can choose to add the accessories option. This recommended add-on extends the theft and damage cover to accessories such as helmet cams, locks and bike boxes.

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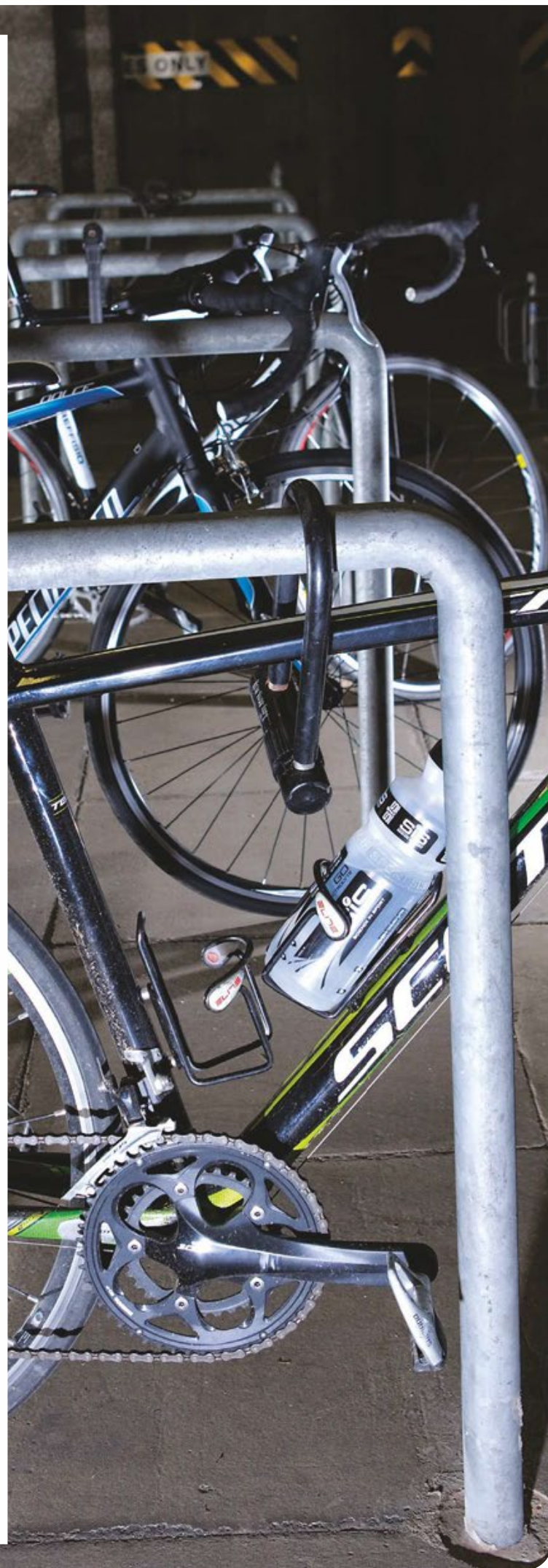
Beyond your bike, cycleplan's specialist cycle insurance covers other scenarios and outcomes that can occur when cycling. The public liability cover of up to £5 million means that if damage were to occur to someone else's car or property as a result of your riding, or if you were in a collision with a pedestrian, any litigation would come out of your policy – rather than your own pocket.

When riding in a large group on a sportive a simple bumping of shoulders or a touch of wheels can be disastrous. But once covered, you won't have to worry about any resulting litigation or payouts, as these will be taken care of by your policy.

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Hill-climb king takes TT record

Seventeen-year-old benchmark broken in Yorkshire

Richard Abraham

Favourable winds, electronic gears and a new time trial bike helped former national hill-climb champion Tejvan Pettinger set a new course record at the picturesque Circuit of Ingleborough time trial in the Yorkshire Dales on Saturday.

The Sri Chinmoy RT rider clocked one hour and 52 seconds on the 27-mile course, to beat Gethin Butler's record that had stood for 17 years.

"I think there was about 600 or 700 metres of climbing; it's always changing and you're always changing gear, either going uphill or going down fast," explained Pettinger.

"I think this year the wind was in the right direction for that course and it was one of those days when you feel good from the word go."

Pettinger put a considerable gap between himself and second-placed Simon Bridge from Manchester Wheelers (1:03.20), with Richard Bideau from

promoting club Pendle Forest CC third in 1:04.53. Rebecca Rimmington (Ikon-Mazda) won the women's competition in 1:15.15, while top junior was Adam Hartley (PH-MAS), who set an impressive 1:04.55 to finish fifth overall.

Pettinger also won the following day's Ilkley CC 10 and put his performance down to a good winter comprising more training than in previous years, plus a new Trek Speed Concept with electronic Dura-Ace Di2 gears.

"With electronic gears you just feel



Mark Haydock (North Lincs RC) on his way to seventh in the Circuit of Ingleborough

that you don't lose as much momentum changing gear, and in a course like that where the gradient changes so often and you're changing gear from the 39 ring to a 56, well, unfortunately it is worth spending all that extra money on electronic gears," he added.

Pettinger will next line up at the opening round of the RTTC Classic Series, the rebranded national series of time trials, in Staffordshire this Sunday before tackling the second round, the Buxton CC mountain time trial, on

April 3. He'll miss out on the Circuit of the Dales over a similar course on April 12 due to a trip to New York for a meditation retreat.

"I think events like the Circuit of Ingleborough and Circuit of the Dales feel really special because they're really hard courses," he said. "Every now and then you look up and you see the stunning scenery, just for a second, before you have to put your head back down and concentrate on the racing."

■ Full result on page 69.

Riders tested for 'mechanical doping'

Following persistent rumours about electric engines being fitted in seat tubes, and an acknowledgement to it in the CIRC report, the UCI descended on Paris-Nice to carry out bike checks the night before the final stage, checking a dozen bikes. Mechanics from the selected teams were required to strip bikes in front of UCI commissaires — including those of Michal Kwiatkowski, Geraint Thomas, Wilco Kelderman and Tony Gallopin — by removing seatposts and bottom brackets to demonstrate that there was no 'mechanical doping'. All the bikes tested were negative.

Edmondson relishing new opportunity

Former Team Sky rider Josh Edmondson signed for An Post-Chain Reaction until the end of the season. Edmondson, 22, rode for Sky in 2013 and 2014 but was not offered a new contract. "After a couple of years playing a team role at Sky I'm looking forward to racing aggressively and perhaps being able to race more in a style that suits me," he said.

Froome slams latest EPO offender

Chris Froome labelled Ag2r-La Mondiale rider Lloyd Mondory "an idiot" after he tested positive for EPO. The 32-year-old Frenchman provided the positive sample in an out-of-competition test on February 17.

Top teams confirmed for Women's Tour

Twelve of the world's top 15 teams will compete in this year's Friends Life Women's Tour, organisers announced last week. Lizzie Armitstead's Boels-Dolmans squad, as well as that of defending champion Marianne Vos, are among those down to ride. The race begins in Bury St Edmunds on June 17.

Rapha's discount store

It has already partnered with Team Wiggins and launched a collection modelled by Peter Kennaugh this year, and now Rapha is opening its own discount store. Featuring past-season and end-of-line stock at reduced prices, the 'Archive Store' in Kilver Court, Somerset will open on April 3. Young riders who show their British Cycling membership card will get an extra 15 per cent off.

To do this week...



Watch Milan-San Remo, March 22

The first Monument of the season, this seven-hour epic culminates in a full-gas blast along the Italian Riviera and the make-or-break final climb up (and down) the Poggio. Greg Van Avermaet, Mark Cavendish and Alexander Kristoff rank among the favourites. Live TV coverage from 1.30pm on British Eurosport.

Ride Mendip Madness sportive, Ston Easton, Somerset, March 22

Promoted by Somer Valley CC with 60 and 40-mile routes through the Mendip Hills, the long route includes the climb of Ebbor Gorge, a tough little brother to the well known Cheddar Gorge that will "have you questioning the organiser's birth rights!" says organiser Drew Buck. Tea and cake at the start/finish, and homemade flapjack halfway round. £6/£7 entry, online and on the day. www.somervalley.org.uk

Go Bike Expo, Manchester, March 20-22

Taking place at Manchester's EventCity, the exhibition will feature demonstrations, a range of manufacturers, plus talks from Dani King, Alex Dowsett, David Millar and Chris Boardman. "We've still got the stuff for serious cyclists, but this year we've also a lot for new cyclists just getting into the sport," said Lucy Dixon from the organising team. Tickets £12 advance; £15 on the door. www.bikeexpo.co.uk

Enter Circuit of the Dales hilly time trial, April 12

Like the look of the Circuit of Ingleborough from last weekend on page 12-13? Entries are still open for the classic 50-mile Circuit of the Dales time trial on April 12. Promoted by Nelson Wheelers CC and taking in some of the same roads through the Yorkshire Dales, the event starts and finishes in Ingleton and usually attracts a top field of domestic testers. £8. www.cyclingtimetrials.org.uk

Guest column

Russell Downing



"The plan was to get in as deep as possible and be in the right place when it all went off"

I was a bit nervous before riding the Challenge Majorca at the beginning of the season. It's been two years since I rode at this level, and 2014 was the first year since 1995 that I hadn't done a stage race. You really miss the strength stage racing gives you, but I put a bit of extra focus into my training this winter to try to make up for it.

I did plenty of four-day blocks, and some double days. I studied the numbers a bit more too, with help from Jon Sharples of Trainsharp. I also tried to make my training replicate the efforts you have to make in European races. Like one I did recently with Ben Swift.

We did 190 kilometres in six hours and 10 minutes. We rode over to the Peak District, did laps with efforts up three long climbs: Surprise, Grindleford and Froggatt. Then we rode over to north Nottinghamshire, where it's flatter. We met Ben's dad there, who was on his motorbike, and we did an hour and 20 minutes behind that. The whole session was just like a European race; big efforts up the climbs, then we went faster and faster to a sprint at the end.

My new team Cult Energy is great. Last week we had the team presentation at the company HQ in Denmark. Instead of riding onto the stage we went down a slide, which is a toy they have in their office, along with table football and a gym. And after getting an eighth place in Majorca it was great to be given protected status in GP Etrusci.

The DS, Andre Steensen spoke to me the night before. He said: "It's gonna hurt on the last climb but if you go deep and get over it at the front, the team will lead you out." We stuck to the plan and got four riders over the climb. Maybe we went a bit early in the sprint, but I got fourth. I was happy but disappointed at the same time. I got a bit swamped, a bit boxed in. It could have been better, but then that's sprinting.

Het Nieuwsblad was good. The plan was to get in as deep as possible and be in the right place when it all went off, but everybody else was trying to do the same and I got caught up in a crash coming out of Ronse. We've now got a busy programme right up to Flèche Wallonne and the Amstel Gold Race. I've been going forwards in the races so far, so I think I can get some results.

Rotherham-born Russell Downing is a former national road champion. He's ridden more races than you've had hot dinners.

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Duncan Heywood, 19

VZW Handiness,
Zottegem, Belgium

Where are you? In the Flemish Ardennes and it's immediately obvious how bike-friendly the locals are. The bike is the king of the road.

What's the racing like? It's relaxed in that the roads are fully closed in races, so you aren't going to hit cars when flying round corners. But there are 100 guys who can win any race, so you spend a lot of time concentrating and trying to learn.

How's the form? In my first race of the season, I just wanted to get round the course, but because I'd conserved my energy I launched two fruitless attacks in the last 10km. One man against an entire bunch rarely pays off, but I can sprint from speed, so tried my luck.

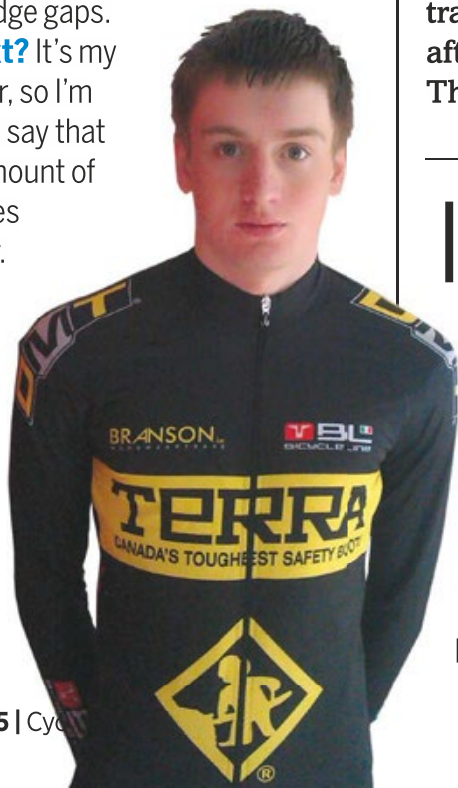
How's life? It's a bit quiet, there's not much to do. Visiting the shop often constitutes a day out. I want to find a Dutch teacher so I can learn the lingo, as it's embarrassing not being able to hold simple conversations.

Anything you miss? I'm out doing what I want to do, so I don't bemoan what I would be doing at home. I miss family, so Skype is good to have.

Anything you have learnt? When to sit back and where to sit on other riders' wheels. It's important to learn from the older racers, as they know when to anticipate echelons and when to bridge gaps.

What's next? It's my first full year, so I'm not going to say that I want 'x' amount of top-10 places or whatever.

I want to progress and show that I can be competitive throughout the year.



Wiggo freed to ride Tour de Yorkshire

Team Wiggins skipper gets the green light

Sir Bradley Wiggins will be able to make his Team Wiggins debut in May's inaugural Tour de Yorkshire, after the UCI granted him special dispensation to join his new squad early.

Under UCI rules, Wiggins would not have been able to make the switch from Team Sky until June 1.

However, the governing body confirmed that its Road Commission had permitted him to complete his transfer to Team Wiggins immediately after his Sky contract ends on April 26. This will allow him to start Britain's

newest international stage race, which begins in Bridlington on May 1. A UCI spokesperson said: "The spirit of the transfer rules are not intended to prevent transfers from Division 1 [WorldTour] to Division 3 [Continental level], as this is an extremely rare occurrence."

Hence, Wiggins will also be able to ride the Tour Series as part of the build-up to his Hour Record attempt in June. The full list of teams competing in the Tour de Yorkshire was scheduled to be announced yesterday (Wednesday), with one notable absentee: Mark Cavendish's Etixx-Quick Step squad.

In honour of 'the world's fastest policeman'

A gym opened this week in memory of Richard Phillips-Schofield, a year since the police officer tragically died after a racing accident at Portsmouth's Mountbatten track.

The gym was opened in Phillips-Schofield's name, at Portswood Police Station, in Southampton.

Phillips-Schofield had garnered the nickname of the 'world's fastest policeman' after he won two cycling

golds and a silver at the 2013 World Police and Fire Games.

He passed away, aged 33, two days after crashing in the Omega Circuits event. Racing will return to the Portsmouth track, it is hoped, subject to a review, currently under way.

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Tour of Britain gets new climb

Domestic tour adds Hartside summit finish for 2015 edition

Nick Bull

This year's Tour of Britain will reach new heights in September with the modern incarnation's "hardest" summit finish to date, atop Hartside Pass in Cumbria.

The route for the eight-day race, which starts on the Welsh island of Anglesey on September 6, and ends with a redesigned London circuit race a week later, was announced at Wembley Stadium on Tuesday.

However, it was the queen stage of the race taking place on day five that garnered much of the attention.

Measuring eight kilometres in length, and 575 metres at the summit, the largely exposed climb of Hartside

Pass is longer and higher than both Haytor and The Tumble, which the race has used for its two previous hilltop finishes.

"I can't imagine the race not having a summit finish included in it now," said race director Mick Bennett.

"And Hartside Pass is the hardest climb we have included so far."

The Pennine climb will be tackled from its western side, starting from Melmerby, and while its average gradient is five per cent, it increases to double that in places.

Move north

"Arguably the toughest part is the final hairpin up to the finish line, which should mean it's going to be a real showdown until the finish line," added Bennett.

That the Tour's key stage will take place in Cumbria somewhat redresses the imbalance of the 2014 edition, which travelled no further north than Liverpool.

London revamp

Stage two from Clitheroe to Colne comes in the form of a Belgian-inspired route, as riders twist and turn through the Ribble Valley and Pendle.

Scotland welcomes the finish on stage three — which takes place inside the grounds of the 17th century Floors Castle — before Edinburgh hosts the modern Tour for the first time when the peloton roll out from Holyrood the following day.

Stoke-on-Trent and Nottingham also make a return to the race for the first

time since 2013 and 2012 respectively.

A new 6.2-kilometre circuit has been designed for the London finale, as the race's traditional route along the Victoria Embankment will be unusable because of the construction of a new Cycle Superhighway.

"We've come up with this circuit, that from a TV and an iconic landmark perspective is absolutely stunning," Bennett said of the final day.

However, perhaps the biggest surprise with the route is the lack of a time trial, particularly since the incumbent rainbow jersey wearer Sir Bradley Wiggins is expected to compete, and that two of the last four editions have featured one as part of a split stage in London.



“As much as we’d love to put a time trial in, the London circuit this year is more of a prologue length as opposed to a final time trial distance,” Bennett added.

MY VIEW...

Nick Bull

Cycling Weekly
news writer



If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it: last year’s Tour of Britain was a thrilling race, helped largely by excellent stage routes. Organisers have opted for more of the same in 2015, and while Hartside Pass may be the queen stage of the race, the stages to Colne and Nottingham could also significantly shape the GC.

Stage by stage

Stage one

Sunday September 6
Beaumaris, Anglesey
to Wrexham, 177km

As well as being the modern Tour’s first Grand Départ in Wales, the stage also passes through six regions (and tackles the Pen-y-Pass climb) en route to finishing in the centre of the Welsh town. “It’s one for the sprinters,” said race director Mick Bennett.

Stage two

Monday September 7
Clitheroe to Colne, 162km

Described by Bennett as the race’s version of “an Ardennes Classic”, this stage twists and turns between the Ribble Valley and Pendle districts so spectators can catch the race a number of times. Nick o’ Pendle is climbed in the opening kilometres.

Stage three

Tuesday September 8
Cockermouth to Floors Castle,
Kelso, 216km

“I think this is the most beautiful stage of the race,” said Bennett, “particularly when we’ve got the Solway Firth to the left.” The inclusion of a stretch of cobbles shortly before the race enters the castle’s grounds, could make the finish harder than it seems.

Stage four

Wednesday September 9
Edinburgh to Blyth, 218km

Winding through East Lothian, the Scottish Borders and Northumberland, stage four runs next to the North Sea for some distance. “It was on this type of stage last year, that the peloton let small groups go up the road and weren’t able to bring them back in time for a sprint,” said Bennett.

Stage five

Thursday September 10
Prudhoe to Hartside
Pass, 171km

The race’s likely decisive stage should be scenic: it follows Hadrian’s Wall for much of the route, as well as passing into the Lake District and alongside Ullswater. “There won’t be many other climbs along the route,” said Bennett, “but Hartside Pass will really break the race up. It should provide a fascinating head-to-head showdown.”

Stage six

Friday September 11
Stoke-on-Trent to
Nottingham, 189km

Set largely in the Peak District, this stage could catch some teams and riders out. “It will be the day when the GC firms itself up,” said Bennett. Nottingham’s Recreation Ground will host the stage finish.

Stage seven

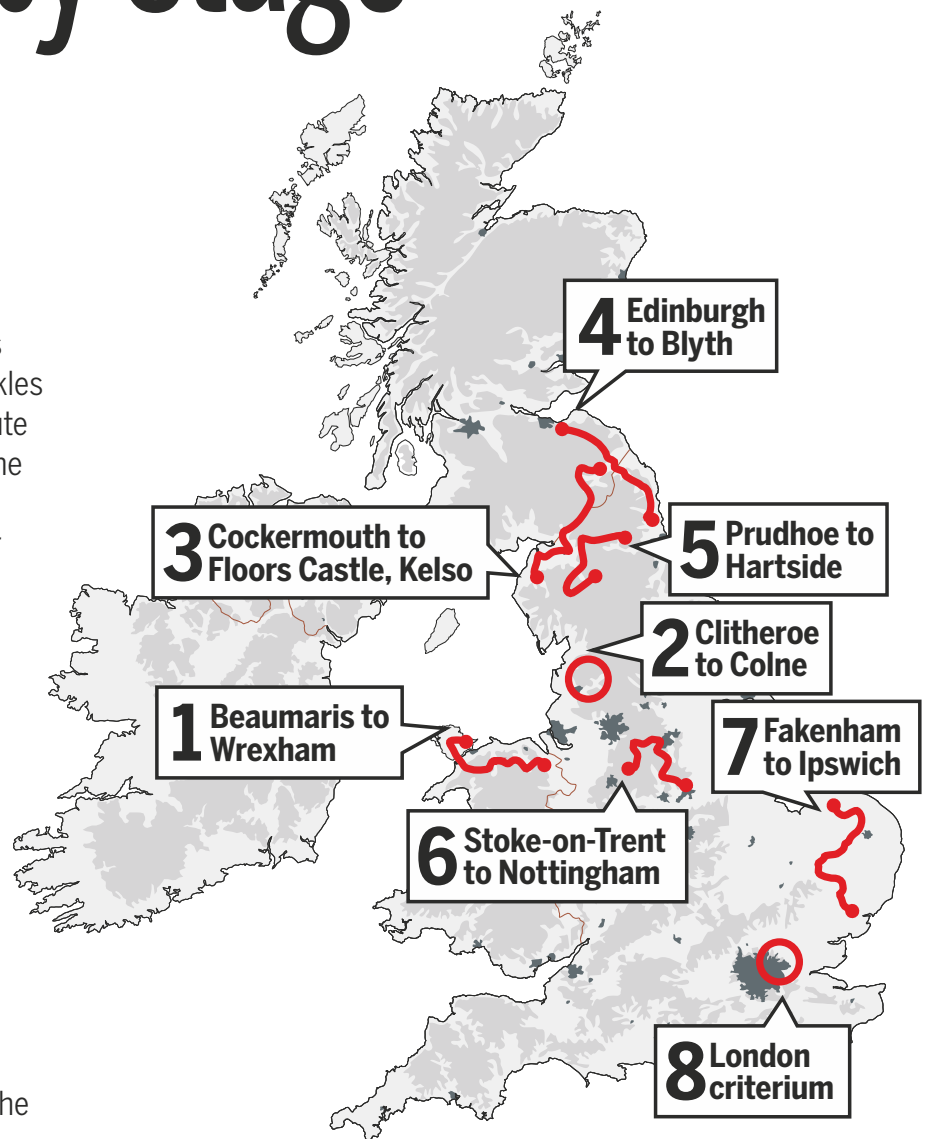
Saturday September 12
Fakenham to Ipswich, 225km

The longest stage of this year’s race takes place on roads familiar to the Tour of Britain: Bury St Edmunds, Stowmarket and Norwich all feature, as does one-time Tour Series host Aylsham. “Because of the exposed roads, if there’s an easterly breeze, it could be a fun stage to watch,” said Bennett.

Stage eight

Sunday September 13
London criterium, 93km

Rather than the traditional Westminster and Embankment circuit race finale, riders will end the Tour tackling 15 laps of a 6.2km loop that starts and finishes on Regent Street. Haymarket, the Strand, Aldwych and Whitehall all feature. “It goes past so many iconic parts of London,” said Bennett.



Spectator denies downing Rowney

Footage examined after fan appears to cause spill

A spectator who brought down Lauren Rowney in the sprint finish to the Drentse 8 van Westerveld last Thursday has denied grabbing onto the Australian's bars on purpose.

Rowney, 26, suffered a broken collarbone when a spectator's arm made contact with her handlebars as she contested a sprint finish with eventual winner Giorgia Bronzini (Wiggle-Honda), Annemiek Van Vleuten and Valentina Scandolara.

The man involved, who identified himself to organisers after footage of the incident was posted on YouTube, claimed that his son had pulled his coat just before the riders passed, which, according to race organiser Femmy van Issum, "probably led to him sticking his arm out".

"I really hope that this guy didn't intentionally grab my handlebar and cause me to crash because that's assault," Rowney said in her blog on the CyclingTips website.

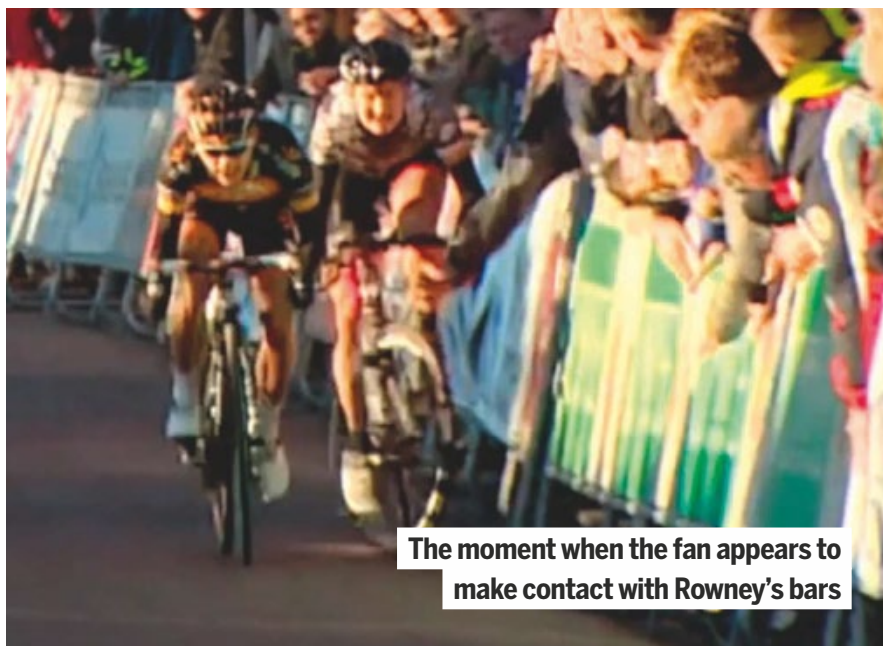


Armitstead seventh

Lizzie Armitstead began the defence of her World Cup title by taking seventh place at the opening round in the Netherlands, the Ronde van Drenthe, on Saturday.

The race was heavily controlled and culminated in a bunch sprint won by Belgian champion Jolien d'Hooe.

"If I'd known the final better, I wouldn't have messed up the corner like I did," Armitstead, who won last year's edition, told *Cycling Weekly*. "That caused a gap, so I started my sprint 50 metres behind and finished my sprint 50 metres behind. It's frustrating."



The moment when the fan appears to make contact with Rowney's bars

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Crash prompts Cav kit change

Gregor Brown

Mark Cavendish's will revert to using a 'normal' FSA chainring for this Sunday's Milan-San Remo after a derailed chain was blamed for costing him a possible stage win and causing Sky's Elia Viviani to crash in a sprint at Tirenno-Adriatico last week.

Technical experts at FSA's HQ are now examining the Manx sprinter's equipment following Cavendish's chain coming off the outside of a carbon-fibre coated chainring on the finish straight at the end of the Italian race's second stage to Cascina last Thursday. Component company Shimano have also examined the shifting componentry and chain.

"It'd be irresponsible to blame the chainring at this point," said team Etixx-Quick Step's sport and development manager, Rolf Aldag. "It still needs some serious analysis, which will take weeks."

Nonetheless, Aldag added that they didn't want to take any chances.

"The suppliers don't like to read about this, but it is how it is," Aldag added.

"No one is blaming anyone, but we are working on it."

After a strong start to the season in which he's already gained six wins, Cavendish had looked to be in good shape to try and repeat his 2009 victory at Milan-San Remo.

However after picking up a stomach bug two weeks ago in South Africa, the Manxman heads to the first of the season's Monuments less certain about his form.

"It's the first time this year where I feel that I'm not ahead of where I want to be," said Cavendish. "I'm a bit nervous."

The race was attended by UCI president Brian Cookson and came a week after ideas were put forward for a women's WorldTour to replace the current World Cup.

The next round of this year's World Cup is the Trofeo Alfredo Binda in northern Italy on March 29.

Photo: Balint Hamvas/cyclephotos.co.uk

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THE BIG QUESTION

“What advice would you give someone starting out in cycling?”

Enjoy it. Set whatever targets you want to set, and don't be influenced by what you think others expect. If you want to ride hills, great; if you want flat, stay on the flat. If you want to target 10 miles or 200 miles, 30 minutes or a full day, set yourself achievable objectives that you can keep improving on and developing, to keep giving yourself that carrot to keep improving and enjoying it.

Adam Coatham

Read all the professionals' tips and watch all the cycling you can. Listen to their advice on training and eating properly, buy yourself a decent bike to start off with and build up your miles gradually, rest when tired and eat every 50 minutes on the bike.

Alex Doherty

Buy the most expensive bike that you can afford, otherwise you will buy your second bike within 12 months. It's cheaper in the long run.

Kevin Hunt

Invest in some padded bike shorts. Even if you don't feel comfortable wearing Lycra, wear them under something you do feel comfortable in. If your tushy isn't comfy, you won't enjoy cycling.

Christina Livingston



Get out rain or shine, and buy kit that keeps you comfortable on the bike. More miles mean more smiles. You will surprise yourself. Mix your events and effort levels; go different places, different

speeds and do it for different reasons. Cycling is not a sport, it's a lifestyle. Don't stare at your pedals, look around and enjoy your company and the landscape.

Edward Woods

“It doesn't get any easier, you just get faster” — Greg LeMond

Chino Galvez

Don't do it unless you're really committed. Cycling is addictive and difficult; once it's in your blood, you'll never get it out. That being said, some of my best memories are from my racing days, and I still look forward to racing again once the kids are a little older.

Michael Watson

Ride at your own pace. Learn what your pace is and ride it. Being comfortable on the bike, knowing both your strengths and your limits is critical for the beginner. Go with your strengths and you will grow rapidly from there.

Sam Herold

Only cyclists understand why dogs like to stick their heads out of car windows! Life is short; enjoy the ride.

Keith Sherratt

Always assume you are invisible. Ride defensively.

Tim Brady

NEXT WEEK'S BIG QUESTION...

What improvements would you make to the British race scene?

Reply to us at cycling@timeinc.com or at www.facebook.com/CyclingWeekly

Letters

Letter of the week
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helmet worth £69.99



Fifty years of cycling

STAR
LETTER

I thought I'd write in on the eve of my husband Bill's retirement to tell you how cycling became a major influence in his life.

One day, a long time ago when Bill was 15 and living in London, he was walking down the road when he spotted something lying by the side of the road. It turned out to be a couple of copies of *Cycling Weekly*, which someone had inadvertently dropped, probably from their bike. Bill took them home and from then on became totally hooked on cycling and bicycles.

All this happened just over 50 years ago, and he has bought *Cycling Weekly* for those 50 years every week without fail!

Claire Hopkins, email

Spanish kindness

Recently I paid my first visit to Tenerife for six days' cycling up Mount Teide. I hired a bike, and apart from a quick spin round the block I didn't pay too much attention to the set-up. I made it up the 24-mile ascent fine on the first day, but the next, about a third of the way up the climb, my lower back was suffering badly.

A Spanish rider came up beside me and started chatting away excitedly and gesticulating at me. At first I thought I had done something wrong because I had no idea what he was saying! Then, the penny dropped. He was telling me that my saddle

was too low. I stopped and raised it; instantly, the back pain disappeared and the riding was a lot more comfortable.

I wonder how many British riders would have done the same thing. That act of kindness was the difference between a pleasant holiday and coming home in pieces. Please take time to set up your hire bike before you hit the road.

Mark Bullock, email

Special birthday gift

My partner at the time bought me a racing bike for my 21st birthday. I looked at it and thought, 'What use will I get from this?' That afternoon we went shopping in Alton; the town centre was closed for crit racing, which was amazing. I watched a young Rob Hayles lap the field and I was hooked.

I raced for 10 years and still ride my bike daily, when I can.

Aaran Eade, email

Honour the Hour

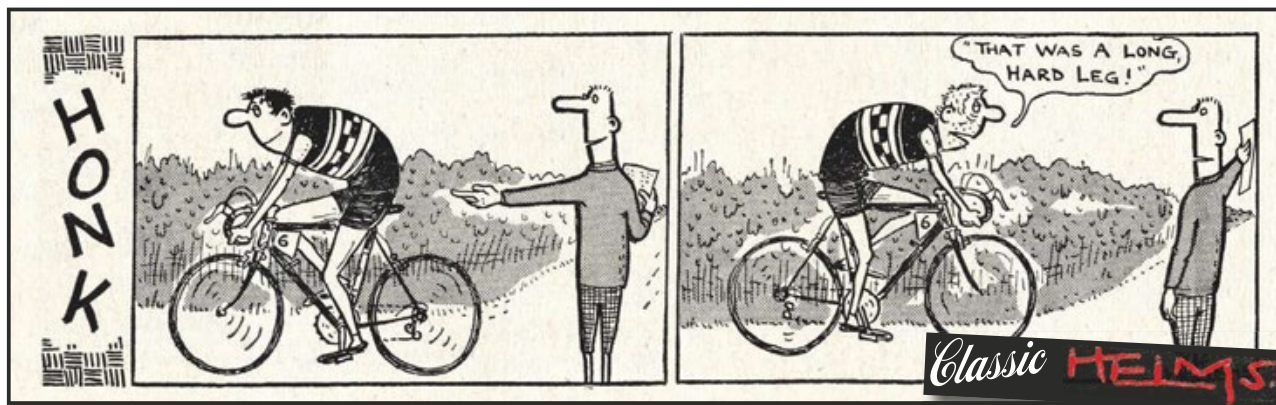
It's great that the UCI now has a YouTube channel, which has recently covered the Hour record rides. However, the bland commentary lets the coverage down. The Hour record is the blue riband of cycling records and requires blue riband commentators. There are a number of talented people who could do this, providing the passion and excitement the event deserves.

Martin Lewis, email

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until November 2009, making Helms the longest continually published contributor not only of this magazine but any publication in the UK and probably the world.

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Sam Bennett: determined to succeed

Irish sprinter Sam Bennett talks to *CW* about his roller-coaster career, which could reach a new peak in France this July

Words: Nick Bull Photos: Cor Vos, Yuzuru Sunada

Sam Bennett recently left Ireland and moved to Monaco. Not that there is anything unique or surprising about that; after all, in recent years, the principality has become home for so many professionals that together they could form a fearsome squad.

However, the relocation shows how far Bennett has come in two years. From being on the verge of quitting the sport after a series of injuries, the 24-year-old is now one of the most promising sprinting talents out there.

"I was right on the brink," said Bennett looking back at the summer of 2013. "I kept on getting injured: fit, sick, fit and so on. It went on for a number of years basically, since I started with [the then French amateur team] La Pomme Marseille [in 2007]."

"In 2013, I had a knee problem. I had college deferred at home — ironically I was studying exercise and health studies — but cycling was what I wanted. So I

just put everything I had into it over that summer, and everything just clicked from there."

The break he needed came in the Tour of Britain: he nearly won on day two into Kendal — "we were told it wasn't steep," he recalled about that day's nasty final kilometre — before he tamed two ascents of Caerphilly Mountain to claim victory three days later in Caerphilly.

Sealing the deal

"I started working with [American coach] Neal Henderson that May," said Bennett. "He got to know me and I trained hard."

"From the end of July running up to the Tour of Britain, I targeted the race. If I wasn't training or eating, I was in bed."

"I was tired every day until the day before the race, but the form was fantastic."

Despite his problems, there was interest in Bennett from NetApp-Endura. Win a stage, the team's

management told him, and a contract for 2014 would follow.

"I knew what was on the line, and after winning the stage, I cried. I think I kept it away from the cameras," he added.

Three wins followed last year: February's Clásica de Almería (this year's edition was won by Mark Cavendish), the Rund um Köln and a stage of Bayern Rundfahrt. Bennett also placed fifth in Scheldeprijs, sixth in the Prudential RideLondon-Surrey Classic and 12th in Ghent-Wevelgem.

He opened this year's account on February 13, when he won the final stage of this year's Tour of Qatar. "I have high expectations of myself, although I don't always meet them," he said of his results.

"I put a lot of pressure on myself to get them. So it's always a relief when I do!"

NetApp's Tour de France debut in 2014 was a relative success, as Leopold König placed seventh overall.

With the Czech rider now gracing the Team Sky colours, Bennett looks set to spearhead the German team — now rebranded as Bora-Argon 18 — in July.

Selection entails a quest for results, meaning Bennett will have a sprint lead-out train built around him at certain races.

"I'm not used to having this amount of support," he said. "I'm used to finding my own way in the sprints."

"In the Tour of Qatar, we did a half lead-out on the final stage and that worked really well."

"I'm still finding my feet with the leadout train, timing and position. I'm sure it will come."



Winning stage six of the Tour of Qatar



Ian Wilkinson's Raleigh Militis Team

Raleigh-GAC's road captain shows us the 2015 Militis he piloted to third in Eddy Soens

Photos: Andy Jones

Fully decked out in red and yellow livery to match Raleigh's distinctive kit, Ian Wilkinson's Raleigh Militis Team is designed to be the perfect all-round race bike. The team use SRAM's top-of-the-range Red 22 groupset, with FSA SL-K seatpost, stem and bars, and a Fizik Aliante perch.

SILICONE GRIP

The team's mechanics have added a Fizik silicone ring to the seatpost — a good decision for early-season riding and racing. This prevents dirt and water from penetrating between the frame and seatpost.



HANDLEBARS

Wilkinson opts for FSA's carbon-fibre SL-K compact bars. There's also no computer mount here, with the Raleigh man opting to ride on feel alone at Eddy Soens.



FORK/CABLE ROUTING

The Militis frame is matched with Raleigh's own C6 fork, while the cable routing is internal. This makes it suitable for upgrade once SRAM releases its electronic groupset later this year.



WHEELS

Raleigh stuck with Cole wheels for 2015. For Eddie Soens, Wilkinson plumped for the T50 carbon tubulars, a 50mm deep model with ceramic bearings and straight-pull aero profile spokes that hit the scales at 1,300g.

The perfect climb

Majorca's Sa Calobra may not have the racing renown of a Tour col, but who cares? It's faultless in every detail



Words: Richard Abraham
Photos: Andy Jones, Oliver Neilson

Close your eyes and try to imagine the perfect cycling climb. What would it look like, and what would it contain?

It would be not too long but not too short; not too steep but not too shallow. It would have a nice steady gradient, but with a couple of ramps to keep you on your toes. Naturally, the scenery should be spectacular. Ideally, it would feature a cafe somewhere, serving good coffee. The weather should be warm and pleasant, the road surface smooth and predictable.

Of course, it would have to have hairpins. Lots of hairpins. Maybe ►

even a hairpin that loops round on itself as the road descends and goes under an bridge.

Think that's being silly? No. What you've just imagined actually exists. It's on the island of Majorca, and it's called Sa Calobra.

One way up

That hairpin is technically called a 'spiral bridge' and, unless you like to ride your bike up and down multi-storey car parks, there are fewer than five of them in Europe, and most are motorways.

Descending on this road, the unique spiral comes not far from the top and sits on a stony outcrop. One moment there's a wall of rock to your right; the next there's nothing but open air, the wind barking in your ears, and you sense that one false move would leave you and your bike floating in the Mediterranean.

A little further down towards the tiny seaside village of Sa Calobra which gives the climb its name, two rock faces have collapsed together like 30ft dominoes, leaving just enough space for a lane of tarmac to squeeze between them.

"You've got to concentrate so much on the way down, and they



don't bend much, those rocks, do they?" says Martin Maltby, a veteran of the climb, having made a number of trips to Majorca with his club Doncaster Wheelers.

There's a reason why the descent of Sa Calobra sticks in the mind. Unlike most other climbs —

where you ride to the bottom, ride up and ride down, either back the way you came or down the other side — everybody experiences Sa Calobra from the top down.

The road itself doesn't actually go anywhere besides that little cluster of cafes in the old fishing port. Unless you wait a few days (or, if you're there in winter, a few months) for the little pleasure boat full of tourists to take you back to Port de Pollença, the only way in is down and the only way out is up. Sa Calobra demands commitment.

"There's no getting out of it, but you don't ever get bored of that descent," says Movistar's Alex Dowsett. "I know I've never experienced anything like it. The first time I got a GoPro camera, I was quite excited to go to Sa Calobra and bomb down it."

The dead-end also gives the road the distinction of having never featured in a professional bike race, for obvious reasons. Far from detracting from the climb, this lack of televisual exposure boosts its reputation in a way. Sa Calobra doesn't need any racing myths and legends; its spectacular physique alone is what makes it special. ▶

Coll of the col

Whether it's mysterious sightings or strange lights appearing over the sea, there's more to Sa Calobra than just a beautiful road. An engineering masterpiece, it was designed by the appropriately named Antonio Parietti Coll and was finished in 1932. There was little economic motive to join Sa Calobra to the rest of the island by road; the sinuous route down the mountain was built to attract tourists, and Parietti Coll had every incentive to make the road as much of a draw as its destination. The 270-degree hairpin was his creative solution to a high drop in the rock that made a standard hairpin impossible. As for strange sightings, local legend makes Sa Calobra and the peaks around it a UFO hotspot.



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Popular with the pros

That said, glance down the leaderboard for the official Sa Calobra Strava segment and you'll find many professional cyclists. At the time of writing, Team Sky's David Lopez had the fastest time: 24:59. With the climb being the location for the team's annual pre-season test — a race in all but name — it comes as no surprise that there is more than one Sky rider in the top 20, too.

"It's a pretty good climb for a test because it's relatively steady," says Sky's Ian Boswell, who made sure he sprinted a little further than the actual Sky test finish line in order to complete the segment (but still sits second to his team-mate Lopez by 11 seconds).

"We do a standing start and everything," he adds, "which maybe hinders your Strava time because you don't get momentum and the run up."

Rumour has it that Sir Bradley Wiggins holds the unofficial record for Sa Calobra, having set a time of around 22:30 during the winter before his Tour de France victory (which gives a VAM, or ascent rate, of 1,750m per hour). Given that

a number of other professional teams and riders use the climb for pre-season training, times are often understandably kept under wraps.

"I'd be looking around the 420W mark if I did give it a good effort," adds Dowsett, who bumped into Boswell on Sa Calobra on Christmas Eve while training for his Hour record attempt.

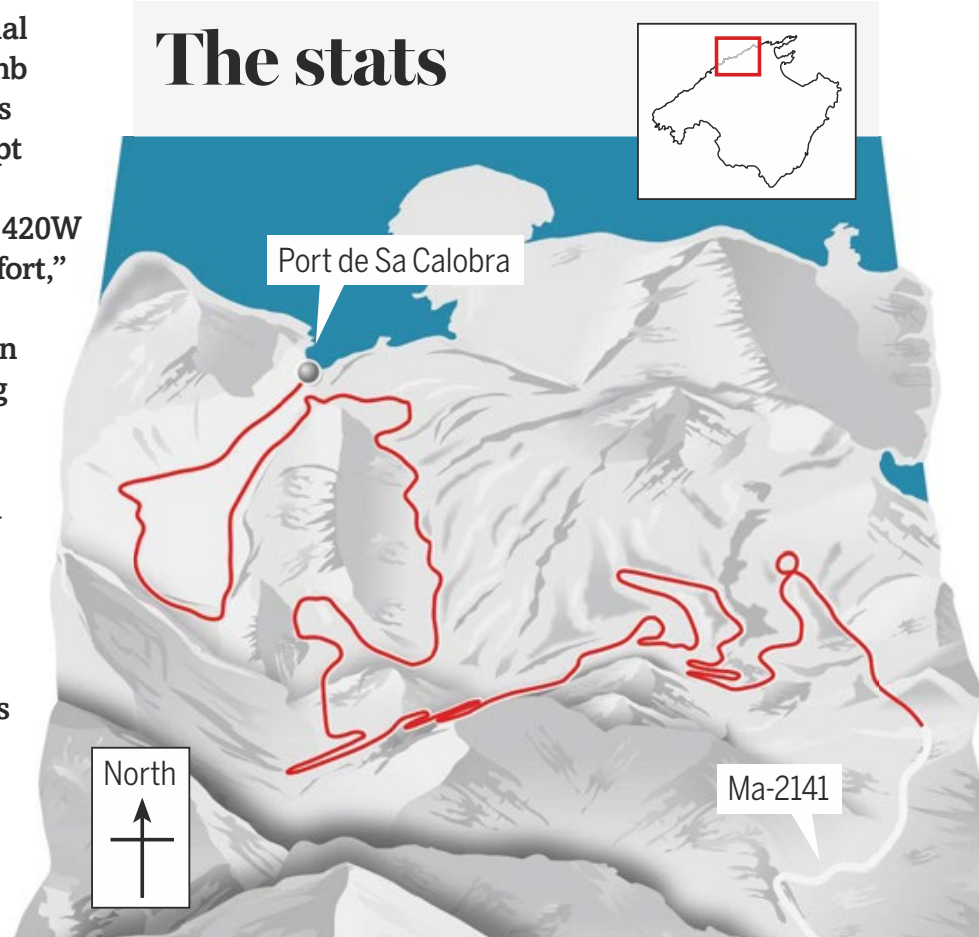
"My best time is the one on Strava [27:43], but I could be a proper cyclist and give you some excuses which might account for 10-15 seconds. I had water bottles, headwinds... and some goats running out in front of me."

For amateur riders, even if their time up the climb is closer to the one-hour mark, Sa Calobra is still every bit as enjoyable.

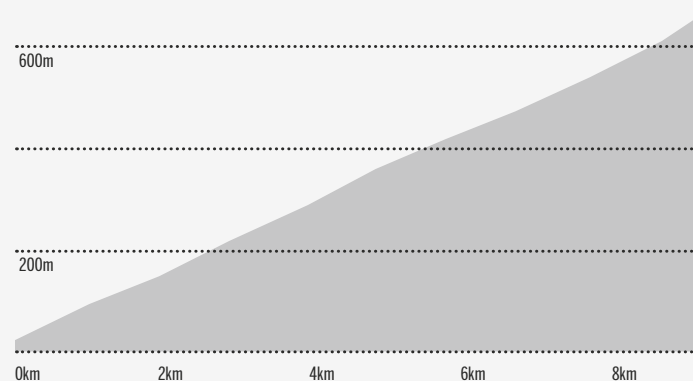
"If you're a club and you come over to Majorca, it's one that is on your list of challenges," says Maltby. "If somebody passes you, you try and keep up with them for a minute and see how long you can hang on."

"We just compete against each other to be the best in the club." ■

The stats



9.4km	668m	7.1%	12%
Length	Height gain	Average gradient	Max gradient



How to do it

- Flights to Majorca are available from a range of UK airports throughout the year.
- Officially called the Coll dels Reis, the MA-2141 to Sa Calobra is just off the main road through the Serra de Tramuntana mountains.
- Majorca is full of bike-friendly hotels and hire companies; Port de Pollença and Port d'Alcudia are popular bases and are both around 40km from the top of Sa Calobra.
- A standard 39/25 gearing is OK for pros and very fit cyclists; a compact chainset and 27 or 28 tooth rear sprocket will make life much more pleasant for others.
- Winter and spring are the best seasons to ride; during summer, the road is choked with tourist buses and an early start is necessary to avoid them. However, the weather in early spring can still be chilly and the climb is exposed to the wind off the sea. Snow is also not uncommon, so come prepared.



Wiggo: unofficial
KoM holder

Power meters: is the future pedal-based?

Goodbye hub-based power meters, hello pedal systems. What are the pros and cons?

Matt Lamy

Knowing how much power you're able to produce is a hugely informative tool for cyclists. The benefit of seeing how you are improving — in pure, unambiguous data — really cannot be underestimated. Using a power meter also helps you to train towards the performance level you need for a particular event. In the shorter term, working with power in specific situations — such as while setting up a bike — can provide instant answers as to whether your changes are working.

Of course, knowing what to do with the numbers you gain from using power meters is a book in itself. Not long ago, most meters measured power at the crank. Now, though, there is a far wider and more affordable range of options.

Crank-based power meters are still the most common, but with PowerTap moving its strain-gauge technology to the pedals, this is all set to change. Just over a year ago, Garmin released its Vector pedal, and this week PowerTap — one of the early innovators in cycle power meters — releases its new P1 pedal.

So what's the advantage of a pedal-based system? In a nutshell, practicality. Despite the accuracy of hub power meters, pro teams are less keen to use them because of the expense of having to build the hubs into all their spare wheels. Equally, when it comes to power cranks,

you're stuck with the crank length you bought, whereas pedals can be quickly swapped over and used with whatever cranks on whatever bike.

Legendary bike designer Mike Burrows used Garmin Vectors while supporting Guy Martin's successful attempt to break the tandem 24-hour world record last year, and he was impressed: "Power meter pedals are a perfect way of testing almost any change to a bike of any shape or size.

"Equally exciting, there should soon be software that displays the pressure you are exerting at any point of the pedal stroke. That will allow you to refine your pedalling action so as to not waste your power by pushing in the wrong place."

So the P1 has come at the perfect time, and PowerTap says it is significantly better than the Vector. Unlike Garmin's product, the P1 is a single construction with no separate pedal pods — little dongle-like sensors that have to be fitted next to the Vector. The P1 works correctly regardless of installation torque and does not require calibration or installation angle setting — meaning you can swap it between bikes, even screwing it in by hand. This is a huge improvement in versatility over the Garmin Vector, which has to be installed at a specific torque setting of 25lb/ft in order to work properly.

For more accurate double-sided metering, the P1 system is also cheaper, at £999, compared to £1,350 for the

PowerTap's new pedal is cheaper and simpler than its rival the Vector

Vector. The P1 is powered by an AAA battery that will last for a claimed 60 hours, whereas the Vector uses a coin-shaped CR2032 battery. (It's worth noting, though, that the Vector 2 is on the way, with rumours suggesting that, among other improvements, it won't have pedal pods.)

The P1 is both ANT+ and Bluetooth smart, meaning you can easily pair it with your phone. And the pedals should be very robust — PowerTap has crash-tested them successfully and they're supplied with a two-year warranty for added peace of mind.



What are the downsides? Mainly, cleat choice and weight. Because of licensing issues with Shimano — apparently developing its own power meter pedals — PowerTap and Garmin power meter pedals are compatible only with Look Keo cleats. That's not necessarily a drawback, as the Keo is the world's most popular cleat system, but at almost 400g a pair — versus 250g a pair for Dura-Ace pedals — there is a weight penalty.

The only additional downside is that if you want a set, you'll have to wait until late spring.

OUR TAKE

There is something beautifully simple about pedal-based power measurement. We can expect quality from PowerTap, a brand well-known for its obsession with accuracy. Pedal systems should be as reliable as other power meters, and are certainly more practical than crank, hub or BB-based systems, a benefit that for many will be the deciding factor.

HOT STUFF

Anna Meares 33 Aero jersey

Full of technical attributes and using UV protective, lightweight and breathable fabrics, the 33 Aero women's jersey has been designed in collaboration with world and Olympic track champion Anna Meares. Named after Anna's first 500m world time trial record, 33.010 seconds, it offers both form and function for just shy of £100.

www.fisheroutdoor.co.uk

£99.99

Report May 7



Fulcrum Racing Zero wheelset

We're looking forward to testing the Fulcrum Racing Zero wheels as part of our lightweight wheel group test next month. We'll

be pitching a range of aluminum options against a number of carbon alternatives.

www.i-ride.co.uk

£799.99

Report April 30



Madison Road Race men's gilet

Madison clothing is going from strength to strength, doubtless thanks to product development with its own pro race team Madison-Genesis. This soft shell gilet is said to be water and wind-resistant with subtle reflective strips for safety, without losing race cred.

www.madison.co.uk

£44.99

Report April 16



Cero RC45 carbon clincher wheelset

These wheels are made of tough stuff. Over long winter rides up and down narrow, grippy British country lanes they dealt with holes and bumps (some intentional, some not) with aplomb. GPS error meant we even took them off-road; the C45s just shrugged and got on with it. The wheels like hard graft, and offer up the greatest rewards when you really give it the beans. They accelerate like a rocket between 10-20mph and will cruise happily at 25. Give them some smooth, flat road and they absolutely sing.

Down sides? They seem more suited to power climbs than long ascents, plus braking can be squirrely in the wet. But for under £800 (and good looks), the C45s can compete with wheelsets double the price. **1,530g**
www.cycledivision.co.uk

9



Specialized Women's Oura Expert Gel saddle £79

Coming in three widths — 168mm, 155mm and 143mm (size tested) — the Specialized Oura thankfully shuns the standard, uber-wide women's saddle design. The central channel is perfectly positioned to prevent the crushing of soft tissue, in either the hoods or drops positions. The combination of gel and foam provides a padded perch with no numbness or soreness. But if anything, it's slightly too plump. The edges created some leg to saddle interference and, despite the lightweight, hollow titanium rails, we suspect these pumped up the weight to 263g.

Those love handles also mean the saddle loses that va-va-voom. However, Specialized also does a Pro version, with significantly less padding and carbon rails — it weighs 100g less but will cost you an extra £20. **263g**
www.specialized.com

7

Speedplay Zero Pavé pedals £269.99

Speedplay is a popular pedal choice; their 'outside the box' design offers dual-sided entry and lots of customisable pedal adjustment. However, any Speedplay user knows the pitfalls of having pedal entry mechanisms on the cleat itself — one wrong step can lead to issues clipping in or out.

Initially created for Classics riders, with Fabian Cancellara spotted winning the 2006 Paris-Roubaix on them, the Zero Pavé aim to allow entry and release even with a clogged cleat. This improvement is created by the removal of the colourful plastic body, optimising function and giving more clearance.

We found after a few deliberate steps in mud we were still able to clip in virtually straight away, but this function comes with a hefty price tag. The feel and performance when clipped in, along with the maintenance, is the same as with the regular Zero model. **226g** **www.i-ride.co.uk**

7



Ritchey Superlogic Evo curve handlebar £265

Ritchey's Superlogic Evo Curve handlebar is a carbon, short reach bar with a four-degree sweep on the top section. When riding, this slight turn encourages a seemingly more ergonomic position — allowing for comfort. The double-radius drop is good and easy to get into, great for tucking in on faster descents. Out-of-the-saddle climbing, the bars felt solid, with little flex or twist. There's a degree of vibration damping from the material, and the all-round finish of the bar is high, as you'd expect at this price bracket. Added details include the grit texture applied for stem clamp and controls, and useful numerical measurements for accurate alignment of controls. **195g (42mm)** www.paligap.cc



8

Cadence Pro Motion LS jersey £115

American brand Cadence has created a simple, race cut jersey with a bold design. We say simple, because there isn't much of a feature list to speak of, other than three rear pockets, all of which work well enough. There's no security pocket, which would have been useful, but it isn't a huge loss. It's been designed for winter training or cyclo-cross racing, but that doesn't mean it's a 'thermal' jersey. There's no windproofing to speak of, and we found it best for plus 10-degree days with a good base layer underneath. The arms are on the long side, which is good for the taller rider, though we did find them a little tight. **222g** www.vamperformance.com



7



Shimano R171 shoes £149.99

Back in our Feb 26 issue of *Cycling Weekly* issue, we reviewed Shimano's R321s in our dream shoes test. These almost identical looking shoes are more for the everyman, costing half the price, but understandably lacking in the incredible stiffness offered by the race-ready R321s. The fit is the same, which means it's good, and true to size, but we had the same issue with the ratchet here as we did on the R321s, which was a little more fiddly than we've come to expect from other modern systems. But at least Shimano is trying something new. The system is adjustable though, which is a plus point, and helped us achieve a more secure fit around the ankle. **576g pair (size 44)** www.madison.co.uk

8

Craft Rain Booties £30

Product of the week

With winter (hopefully) behind us, it's time to ditch the heavy-duty neoprene overshoes in favour of slightly lighter offerings, and the Craft Rain Booties seem like the perfect option. The level of protection against wind and rain is a good match for typical spring conditions, while retaining a lightweight construction and a great aerodynamic fit that makes these overshoes a great choice for early-season racing. A Velcro strap under the foot and an elasticated upper cuff aid this excellent fit, while a rear tab makes them easy to pull on and off. Finally the Kevlar-reinforced heel and toe should give the durability we'd hope for from such a good pair of booties. **100g** www.united-brands.co.uk



10

LONG TERM TEST

Four months later

Mavic Thermo Plus Shoe Covers £48

We have been riding these Mavic overshoes throughout winter. While we remain impressed with the warmth and fit, marks have been lost with regards to durability. Substantial wear means we will require a new pair of overshoes next winter — disappointing considering the high price. www.mavic.com

6

Succumbed to a UK winter



Can't live without

One23 Hex Allen Key Set £15.99

Unfortunately, this amazing coloured set of Allen keys is discontinued, so it seems harsh to show you what you can't buy, but this was so good we wanted to shout about it. We found this hard-wearing and easy to use, and was a quirky way to brighten up our toolbox. The set covers most Allen keys needed and with the added colour, we've found it easier to keep hold of the full set. www.todayscyclist.co.uk



Good looks, great tools

Azione Questo II

£3,255

Tested by: Chris Catchpole | Miles ridden: 257 |
Size tested: 54cm | Weight 7.65kg/16.87lb

Azione is a British brand with more than a touch of Italian style. Based in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, the company comprises a group of keen racers, mechanics and designers, building bikes for customers looking for something unique. The

Questo II has the strength to change the shape of things for Azione, which until now has been a relatively small UK concern. For a start, this bike is no shrinking violet. The sleek graphics, painted on strongly shaped tubes caught the eye of many a passer-by.

Frame
The Questo II makes use of Azione’s own ‘LAF’ (Linear Asynchronous Fibre) carbon technology. It’s a unidirectional carbon fibre lay-up, a technology favoured by manufacturers over the traditional ‘weave’ pattern thanks to its improved strength-to-weight ratio. The LAF system uses fibres that are laid slightly out of line to the fundamental direction of fibres. This, apparently, gives extra support against torsional loads generated through pedalling or cornering.

The Questo II’s aero credentials are based on the knowledge and expertise of the designers, rather than numbers provided by scientific testing. But that’s not to say it isn’t a technical bike. Azione’s own LAF tubing, combined with tried

and tested aero shaping and geometry mean the Questo II isn’t a shot in the dark. It’s a sensible technical evolution over the original MK1 model. Most of us judge a bike on how it handles on the road, and how it reacts to the ride and the rider’s input. In this regard, the Questo II feels stiff and responsive, and based purely on our own regular routes and rides, came up fast in terms of PB numbers too. But the important thing is how the bike makes you feel, and the Questo II made us feel fast.

Specification
Azione offers each of its bikes as customisable builds. The frame remains the same, but different wheels and components can be selected based on price or preference. The Questo II frameset starts the ball rolling at £1,295 and this build hit the checkout at £3,255 — a very similar price to that of the new Canyon Aeroad CF SLX 7.0 we reviewed recently. The spec is similar too; deep section carbon wheels and a Shimano Ultegra 11-speed groupset are on show here.

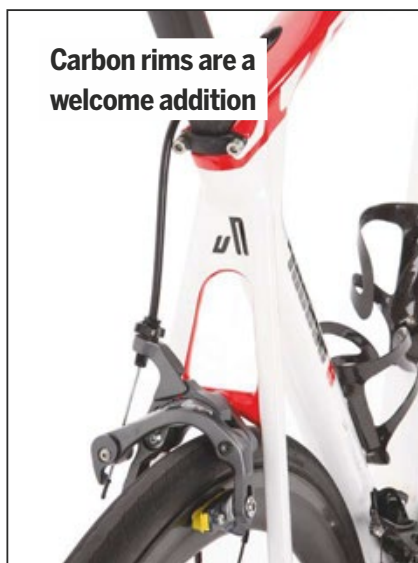


Italian styling meets British engineering

Azione Questo II							
£3,255							
Frame	8/10						
Specification	7/10						
Ride	7/10						
Value	7/10						
Distributor	www.azione.cc						
Frame	Questo II LAF Carbon						
Fork	Carbon fork						
Size range	50-60cm						
Weight	8.15kg						
Groupset	Shimano Ultegra 6800						
Alterations	Selle San Marco Regale Team saddle						
Gear ratios	12-28, 50/34						
Wheels	Azione 28mm carbon-fibre						
Tyres	Vittoria Rubino Pro 25mm						
Bar	Azione Carbon						
Stem	Azione Carbon						
Seatpost	Azione Aero seatmast						
Saddle	n/a						
							
SIZE TESTED: 54							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
55cm	73°	73°	14cm	38.5cm	40.5cm	54cm	98.0cm



Carbon rims are a welcome addition



Beefy British bottom bracket



partly be down to the weight. With the Questo II, you're hauling an extra half-kilogram up to speed (our Questo II weighed 7.65kg over the Aeroad's 7.15kg). It might not sound like much, but with repeated accelerations, it all makes a difference.

The Questo II's handling is very direct and agile. A sprightly front end tends to be less forgiving over longer rides and lends itself more towards racing than social club runs. The smooth surfaces of a circuit race were ideal for the Questo II, where we could really appreciate the handling.

Value

Value can be a hard thing to define on a business model that has been created to produce bikes bespoke to its customers' needs. The frameset gets things going for a reasonable £1,295. Most of the other kit available is reasonably priced, too. You may save money buying a groupset online rather than purchasing it through Azione, but then you'd miss out on its expertise when it comes to fitting the components. For the whole build, at £3,255, the Questo II we tested is definitely in the ballpark for a competitively priced aero bike.

The Questo II-stickered wheels are from Azione's own shop. At 28mm deep, with a stiff and wide carbon-fibre rim, they made cornering a treat and reinforced the bike's racing potential. The stiff wheelset only helped to accentuate road feedback though, so it might be worth considering something more forgiving if you are looking for a laid-back ride.

Riding

We had a rather aggressive handlebar fitted — a one-piece bar-stem combination, with a low drop — that had us

forever on the attack. Once at speed, the bike holds it well, and the own-brand hoops did nothing to slow us down. It is a stiff bike, and not the most forgiving, particularly through the front end over rougher surfaces. Some riders like to feel every last ripple in the tarmac, especially on a bike designed to be ridden fast, but for me it could be a little smoother on the rougher roads.

It felt stiff under acceleration too, but it wasn't as responsive as the recently tested Canyon Aeroad CF SLX. That could

Verdict

When we're testing an aero bike, there are a few specific things we look for. The feeling of speed is a key element, but a bike that's comfortable enough to ride all day is crucial too, as is a bike that handles exceptionally well (although character and aesthetics are factors too, of course).

The Questo II almost nails each of these but comes up short in the comfort stakes — its chunky front end and direct handling made it tiring over a full day's ride. To suggest

the Questo II 'falls short' might be doing it a disservice though, because this bike is fast and fun to ride. It looks great too, and thanks to Azione's custom-build approach, you can spec exactly the bike you want, in the colour of your choice.

7

For

- Stiff, responsive ride
- Unique appeal

Against

- Fidgety front end
- Harsh

Bar tape

Functionality, comfort and style are all key factors of bar tape, as *CW* gives five a try

What

As one of the main points of contact on your bike, bar tape should not be overlooked. But as well as being functional, putting some fresh tape on your bars is an inexpensive way to inject some personality and style to your bike. By coordinating the colour of your bar tape with other parts of your bike, you can really make it stand out from the crowd. We have selected five different tapes, ranging in price from £9.99 to £27.99.

Why?

There is a huge amount of choice when it comes to bar tape. Are more expensive rolls worth it? Some have more padding than others, some are easier to wrap, while others just look better. In addition, bar tape often includes finishing tape and bar bungs, so we have assessed the quality of these items, too.

How?

We have wrapped and unwrapped the tape, and used it on rides in a variety of conditions: wet and dry; smooth roads and rough surfaces; with gloves and without. For consistency, we have weighed each tape as a pair of wrapped rolls out the box, without bar bungs. There is very little in it, even if you are the consummate weight weenie.

Supacaz Super Sticky Kush £27.95

From the perennial sunshine of California comes Supacaz. The first thing you notice are the bright, loud and neon colours. But, for those wanting a more subtle approach, there is always a black option. Favoured by the Astana team, Supacaz neon pink and yellow tape has adorned the winning Tour de France bike of Vincenzo Nibali.

Weight
98
grams

It wraps well, helped by a small amount of stretch and high quality finishing tape — in our experience finishing tape can often look good, but be fairly ineffective.

The finish is smooth, so is a little slippery when wet — not that it seemed to hamper Nibali, who has regularly beaten his rivals in horrendous weather. Comfort is good too, with a decent degree of vibration damping.

9

Colours: too many options to list here — see website for full range
www.silverfish-uk.com

Prologo One Touch £20.99

One Touch is the newest tape from Prologo and is made from Polygrip, which is claimed to give a secure grip in all weathers. This bar tape is really comfy and has a good feel to it. One downside is that it isn't really reusable.

Weight
58
grams

The tape disintegrated and ripped as we unwrapped it from our bars. Considering the price, we have marked it down a point for this.

It's aesthetically pleasing with a couple of nice colour combinations that you may recognise from several professional bikes, such as those used by the Lampre team. The bar bungs and tape feature the Prologo motif, so if you don't want your bike to look like an advert, you may prefer a more subtle tape. The finishing tape works OK, but we still prefer good old black electrical tape.

7

Colours black/white; white/black; neon fluoro/black
www.i-ride.co.uk



Fizik Superlight Classic £14.99

Despite the name, this is not quite the lightest tape on test. With its perforations the Fizik Superlight tape has a classic style and looks good on any bike. This is, in part, down to the huge range of colours and finishes that Fizik offers.

Weight
76
grams

There are too many to list but it includes all the colours you would expect in both gloss and matte finishes. We really like the wide range of colours; it means you can match almost any bike, and at £14.99 the tape is among the best on test when it comes to value.

Our white matte tape wrapped pretty well, but was not as stretchy as some of the others. Despite being white, the classic finish on our test tape meant it could be cleaned easily and effectively with hot soapy water, and was quickly restored to looking like new.

9

Colours: too many options to list here — see website for full range
www.extrauk.co.uk

Lizard Skins DSP 2.5mm £27.99

DSP stands for 'Dura Soft Polymer' meaning that animal lovers can sleep easy in the knowledge that this tape is not made from actual lizards. If you have never tried Lizard Skins DSP tape we strongly urge you to. We have fallen in love with the way this tape feels on the bars, so much so that we have relished the recent mild weather as an opportunity to go sans gloves, such is the pleasant texture of this wrap.

The tape is good at absorbing shocks and looks great too, with top quality finishing tape that actually works, unlike some of the others we have used. It is impressively light considering how comfy it is, and is hard wearing and very easy to clean. It can be unwrapped and reused if necessary, which goes some way towards justifying the £27.99 price.

Weight
60
grams

10

Colours: too many options to list here — see website for full range
www.2pure.co.uk

Profile Design Bar Wrap £9.99

This tape is both the cheapest and the lightest in our test. The cork-style tape is actually synthetic to make it more durable. This tape doesn't feature an adhesive backing, which means it is less hassle to fit and contributes to its lower weight. It also means you're not left with a messy residue on your bars when it's removed.

It was possible to tear this tape, so care is needed during fitting. In addition, the cork-like texture was not the easiest to clean, and the finishing tape was poor. The bungs feature a mirrored silver finish that wears off quite easily and can look pretty cheap after a while.

Criticisms aside, the tape looks good on the bike, comes in a great range of colours — including some funky marble effects — and is available at a great price.

Weight
40
grams

8

Colours: too many options to list here — see website for full range
www.madison.co.uk



FITNESS

How do I... burn fat on a morning ride?

Training before breakfast may help you burn more fat and lose more weight

Words: Marc Abbott

If the key focus of your training is fat loss, there are some simple rules to apply to your morning ride. Surprisingly, you might be better off eating nothing before you set off.

“If you are looking to reduce fat stores, you can add some fasted training to your weekly regime,” suggests Emma Barraclough, senior sports nutritionist for Science in Sport (www.scienceinsport.com).

“Your blood sugar will be low and much of your liver glycogen will have been used in your overnight fast. In this situation, fat becomes the dominant fuel source.

Training in this way improves the metabolic pathways for burning fat.”

There is a word of warning, however, when it comes to riding on an empty stomach. Barraclough advises: “You must keep the intensity low to encourage your body to stay in the fat-burning zone. If you push too hard, you’ll become glycogen-depleted very quickly, rather than using fat as the primary fuel, as you won’t be able to metabolise fat fast enough to maintain the energy output to ride at a higher intensity.”

Let’s not forget the number of calories you’re burning. A low-intensity ride over several hours will burn lots of calories, but what if you’re pressed for time?

“If you only have 30-40 minutes to spare before work, you’re not going to get a very high overall calorie spend for a ride of low intensity,” says Barraclough. “In this situation, you’re better off performing some high-intensity intervals to stimulate your metabolism and achieve a

higher overall calorie spend for the session.”

OK, we’ve just told you that you need to go for an easy spin to burn fat, but there’s also evidence in support of performing pre-breakfast intervals, according

to Barraclough: “Although fat won’t be the primary fuel source in this session, your greater calorie spend will equate to an energy deficit over the course of the day more easily, meaning you’ll still lose body fat.”

As regards recovery: “Adequate recovery of protein and carbohydrate within 30 minutes of completing your session is key to keeping your metabolism lifted,” Barraclough says. “If your energy intake is too low, your body slows down your metabolism to conserve energy — not what you want.”

Essential points

- Keep intensity low
- Try fasted riding
- Perform intervals if time is short
- Get your recovery routine sorted

Though it might sound like it’s flying in the face of nutritional convention, riding on an empty stomach to burn fat has a sound scientific foundation. Because you’ve already depleted much of your glycogen stores overnight, the body is forced to use a higher proportion of fat as fuel.

Longer morning rides should be performed at a low intensity (you need to be strict about this; if someone overtakes you, just deal with it). This is to ensure that you’re using fat as your primary fuel source.

Some of us will have a cupboard full of nutrition products in the kitchen for this very purpose, but recovery isn’t to be taken lightly. Either make up a recovery drink from one of the tubs, or cook up some egg or even beans on toast — both are good sources of protein and carbohydrate. Make sure you eat within 30 minutes of getting home.

YOU SAY

I do this once a week for a couple of hours, not pushing hard, just a steady pace.

John Hickmott

I always used to do it. The body adapts quickly and it becomes normal to not eat. I can ride up to 40 miles on just water.

Jonny Appleby



If you don't have the luxury of a few pre-breakfast hours on the bike before work, make the limited time count with some interval training. The pay-off, despite the fact you'll use more glycogen (than fat) as fuel, is that you'll accrue a calorie deficit over the day — provided you don't over-indulge.

Implications: if you go too hard too soon, you are in trouble. Can't sustain effort unless you have trained your body for it.

Matt Halliday

I do this twice a week when I ride the hour to work at 4.15am. It's too early for food. Not pleasant but a must if I want to get some miles in.

Geth Shooter

I never eat before the hour-long spin into work — always Zone 2 HR. Power has improved and weight loss has been good.

Robert Hughes

Fasted morning rides to work, always in a nice comfy zone. Can't beat them.

Mark Hodson

Things to do this week

Ride a Wattbike

The Wattbike is great for improving fitness. It shows your power output, cadence and heart rate, enabling you to work to specific zones. In addition, it will record your pedalling motion, and display it via its Polar View. Each stroke is recorded and shows the force you are applying to the pedals and the position of the pedals when applying this force. Wattbike was developed in association with British Cycling, designed and used to help identify emerging cycling talent. Most gyms now have Wattbikes too. For more information, go to www.wattbike.com.



Eat cherries

Not only are cherries a delicious treat, they also contain compounds that can significantly boost health.

Cherries have been shown to reduce cancer risk, improve sleep and balance blood pressure. They have anti-inflammatory properties and are rich in vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.

Montmorency tart cherry juice may even accelerate recovery after intense cycling, according to one recent study, by reducing markers of fatigue.



Go for a massage

Many of us enjoy a massage, especially when we're feeling achy after hard training. Though the effectiveness of massage remain contentious, some research does suggest that it can ease feelings of soreness, help reduce inflammation and increase blood flow. But sporting performance isn't solely down to physiology; positive feelings after massage, such as a heightened sense of well-being, shouldn't be

understated. For some, a massage that helps them unwind after a long day in the saddle is just as important as a recovery shake. Try it. You might like it.



Banish knee pain

Knee pain may be common but it's rarely simple. Here, cycling's 'Doctor Knee' Graham Theobald explains why stringent analysis of the causes and effects must always be an integral part of alleviating the ache

Words: Graham Theobald Photo: Chris Catchpole

At this time of year, as the weather begins to improve and we start racking up more miles on the road, many of us fall victim to so-called 'spring knee'. Of course, there is no such thing. It's a euphemistic term deployed in an attempt to shrug off an ache by saying to ourselves, "Oh, it's probably nothing, just a few too many miles lately... it's just spring knee." No, it isn't. Ignoring knee pain in this way is invariably unwise and potentially ruinous for your upcoming season. Thankfully there is an alternative, more enlightened way...

Just because you have experienced knee aches before which eventually disappeared, it doesn't mean you should grin and bear it this time. The temptation is to attribute the pain to some vague cause such as 'too many miles at the weekend', 'a change in the weather' or 'I must be getting old', before grimacing and carrying on. That won't do. Knee pain almost always has a specific, traceable cause, and it's imperative you get the issue diagnosed and treated.

Accurately determining the cause is the crucial first step towards its resolution. Soldiering on rarely helps,

unfortunately, and making unreasoned changes to bike set-up pointlessly complicates matters.

Get it sorted

This is not meant in an alarmist way; knee pain does not necessarily signal a serious problem, but if it hurts during or after riding and continues to hurt after 24-48 hours' rest, *something* is almost certainly wrong. Do not ignore it. The best course of action is to seek help from a specialist physiotherapist, sports therapist or sports doctor who has experience treating cycling-related

Knee-friendly position

Keeping knees pain-free begins with a comfortable position

Flexing from the hip allows the lower back musculature to stabilise the spine and pelvis, while the gluteals produce power. Conversely, flexing purely from the lower back can rotate the pelvis backwards and inhibit the gluteals. This consequently overworks the lower back muscles and can produce pain and associated tightness in the lumbar and thoracic spine.

Correct seat position is critical in altering knee joint forces and/or avoiding potential injury (Bini et al, 2001, 2013). How you sit on the bike is important, but so too is how you move your body; the rider's biomechanical set-up and the bike's purely mechanical set-up should complement one another. The rider should be well balanced on the bike and the position should promote the use

of the correct musculature. That said, everyone is different, so consideration of both body and bike must be taken into account.

The following factors are critically important when setting up your position:

- 1. Correct saddle height:** Maximises power; avoids excessive force on the joint (overload); avoids over-stretching the hamstrings and ITB.
- 2. Good hip flexion:** Keep the lower back as straight as possible on the bike (practise this off the bike). Requires good gluteal flexibility, enabling the gluteal

muscles to produce more power.

3. Stable pelvis: You need a saddle of correct width and type for your sit bones, enabling stability and ensuring comfort.

4. Minimise medial/lateral knee movement: Excessive movement creates torsion (twisting) at the knee joint. You may need to strengthen the gluteals and in particular the gluteus medius.

6. Float at pedal cleat: First, centre the cleat under the line of the meta-tarsals (ball of foot) and use a pedal system with at least six degrees of float.



knee pain. He or she will endeavour to identify the cause and provide advice on making appropriate changes, with a simple treatment, self-help and management plan to prevent recurrence.

Cycling-related knee pain is often labelled with the generic tag ‘patello-femoral pain’ or PFP for short. However, the usefulness of this term is often called into question by clinicians and researchers, as it does not very precisely describe the patho-physiological condition or more importantly the likely underlying causes.

Multiple causes

As we will see, it is more important for a cyclist to address the specific factors that led to their pain, as opposed to throwing a ‘blanket’ of treatments at a condition only hazily classified as PFP. Understanding is key to the solution.

The flow-chart overleaf shows the wide range of knee problems that commonly affect cyclists, each linked to its likeliest underlying cause and the best short-term treatment protocol. This illustrates the multi-factorial nature of cycling-related knee pain. In running-based sports, there are fewer variables, but in cycling, the bike adds many more possible contributory factors. As we will see, however, it may be necessary to seek further help from a trained specialist.

“Treating each of the factors in a holistic way, at home and in the clinic, is vital”

It is important to understand that there are a wide range of potential causes of a cyclist’s knee pain. There are many variables that have an effect on the musculo-skeletal system (muscle length, joint mobility, etc); these include pedal and cleat position, gear selection, training patterns, saddle height, fore/aft position, and many others. Detective work will be required to ascertain which of these factors is the most pertinent. The work your therapist does here is crucial in determining the overview of the presenting condition. Factors such as your work life and sporting history can add to the complexity of the diagnosis, but may also shed light on the underlying cause and potential solution.

Treatment will be most effective when it is targeted towards an isolated cause (though it is worth remembering that there may be more than one cause). This is where specialist assessment plays a vital role. If the patella is not tracking correctly, for instance, then this issue

should be worked on (as evidenced by Sheehan et al, 2010).

The initial goals of treatment are to reduce the pain and/or discomfort at the knee. This normally involves controlling any inflammatory issues such as articular cartilage irritation and, where present, associated swelling. There may be other contributory factors such as muscle tightness, associated cartilage degeneration and control issues emanating from the hip — all associated with patella maltracking. Treating each of the relevant factors in a holistic way, at home and in the clinic, is vital. Specific strength work is often part of this plan.

A specialist physio or sports doctor will carry out a full examination of the cyclist, looking at muscle length, joint mobility, and relative amounts of lower back flexion and flexion from the hip involved in achieving their riding position (see box). If a clinician doesn’t consider the extrinsic factors (bike, cleats, training, etc) as well as the patient’s body, he or she is only doing half their job. This is why it’s well worth finding a specialist who has experience working with cyclists.

Growing knowledge base

There is a wealth of research behind modern bikes, and athlete physiology is supported by decades of scientific

SCENARIO 1

Overuse

Bernard usually rides 100 miles per week across four commutes to/from work and one longer ride of 60 miles at the weekend. This training pattern is interrupted when Bernard completes a normal week followed by a holiday in Majorca to enjoy the spring sunshine, where he cycles for seven days solid with an average mileage of 60 miles each day and one 100-mile ride. After flying home, his knee hurts. The likeliest cause is overuse, i.e. 30 per cent more than his normal training.

This overuse may have had an impact on the articular cartilage in Bernard’s knees as well as his tendons and other soft tissue structures. The result is usually pain but not always immediately; it may not begin to hurt until the next bout of training.

MORAL Don’t shock your body. A huge leap up in mileage makes you highly susceptible to injury. Build up in gradual increments.

SCENARIO 2

Overload

Bridgette usually rides alone, but for a change she decides to go out with group ride. The pace is faster than she is used to, and she resorts to staying on the big ring to keep up, despite the fatigue and fall in cadence. Because of the low cadence, her power falls and her technique deteriorates. As a second consequence, the mechanical alignment of Bridgette’s knee is altered as she pushes hard and creates torsion in the knee joint.

The articular cartilage within the patello-femoral joint of Bridgette’s knee becomes overloaded and also stressed. We know that PFP is influenced by increased stress on the articular cartilage (Farrokhi et al, 2011).

MORAL Only use the big ring while you can keep up the cadence. If your cadence is falling, you need to shift down and reduce the resistance. Big-ring cycling doesn’t always mean big power.

SCENARIO 3

‘Spring knee’

Jeremy has a few weeks off the bike over winter. He does some turbo work and a little cross-training. When the weather finally improves, Jeremy increases his training volume from two hours to five hours, including a two-hour Sunday ride, the first group outing of spring. In the latter stages of this long ride, Jeremy’s knee begins to hurt. Old-school cyclists within the club say: “Don’t worry, it’s just spring knee — cycle through it, lad!”

MORAL Undertaking a sudden increase in training load and volume is taking a huge risk — regardless of what the elders of the club have to say.

study — but only recently have we begun to stringently assess the interaction between the two: body and bike. However, an acceleration in understanding is imminent. Cycling's professionalisation and growth in popularity has generated a rapidly increasing evidence base. This means we now understand cycling knee pain better than ever before.

Overuse and/or overload

The commonest cause of knee pain in a cyclist is overuse and/or overload: riding farther and/or harder than your body is currently conditioned to tolerate. Although overuse and overload are intimately connected — those training too much are often also guilty of training too hard — it's important to recognise that the two factors can have separate effects on knee pain. Riding in a 'hard' gear, because people tell you to, is not always the right decision; you may significantly increase the load on your knee, possibly to intolerable levels. The key is to understand the specific cause of your particular pain.

Even though overuse and overload are rarely mutually exclusive, they are clearly separate entities and, regardless of their chicken-or-egg relationship, it is important to assess which is the principal cause of an individual's pain. This will determine the focus of the treatment and rehabilitation programme. A combination of correct bike set-up and treatment can facilitate a successful rehab programme (Tamborindeguy, 2011).

References available on request



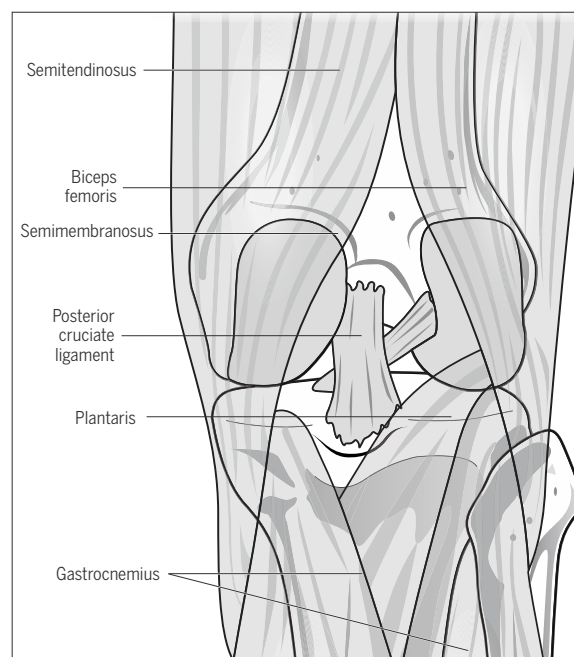
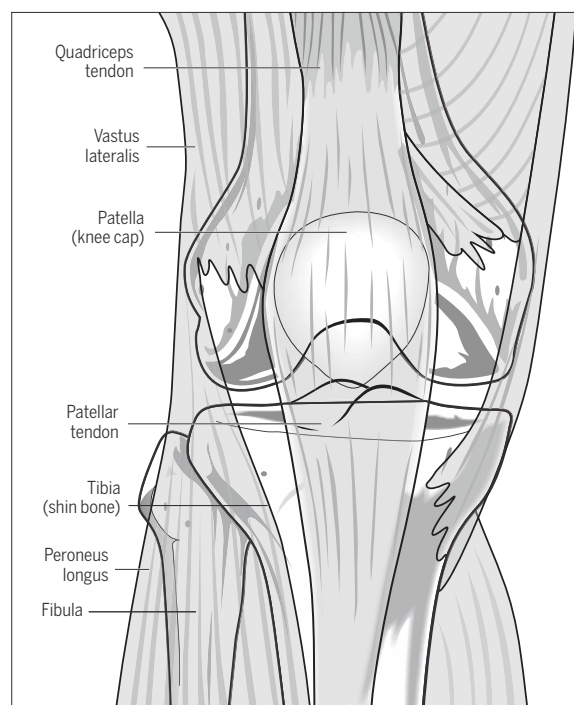
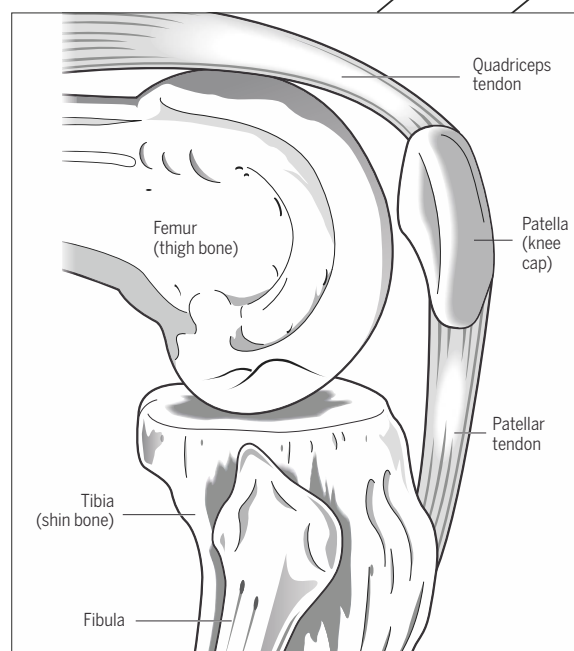
Knee knowhow Graham Theobald

Graham Theobald is clinical director at The Body Rehab Injury clinic based near Kendal in the

Lake District. He has a special clinical interest in cycling-related knee pain and has just submitted his PhD thesis on the subject. He has worked across the world on research and with professional cycling teams. Graham has completed seven Ironman triathlons and is a member of the Club de Cinglés, having completed six ascents of Mont Ventoux within 24 hours. www.thebodyrehab.co.uk

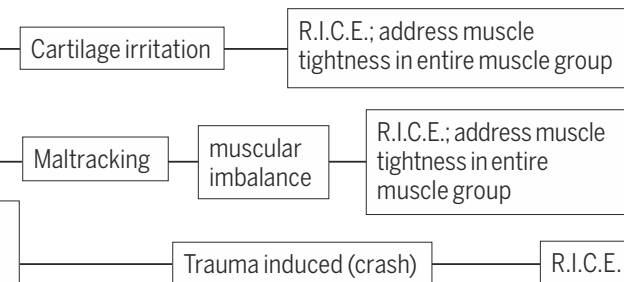
Types of knee pain

Common issues and remedies

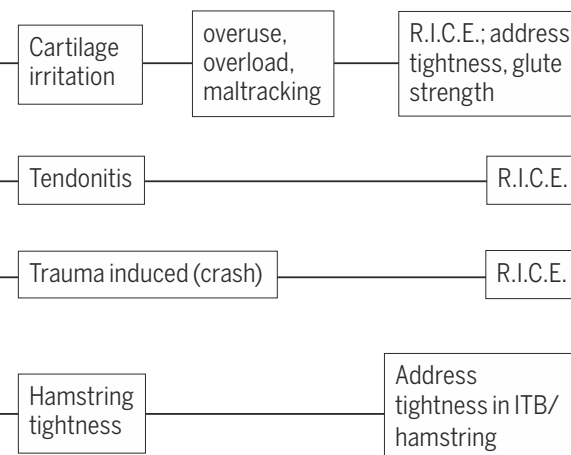


Cause —————> Solution

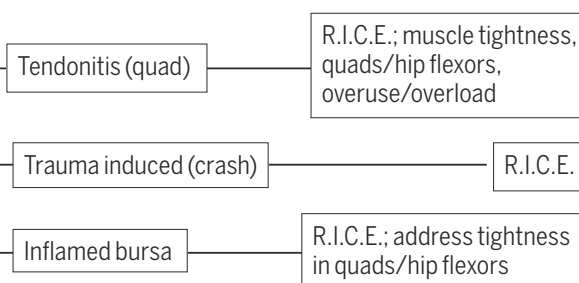
Retro patella (behind the kneecap)



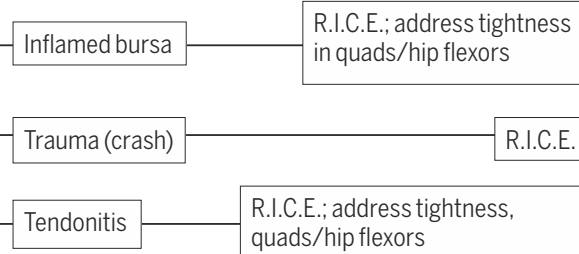
Lateral



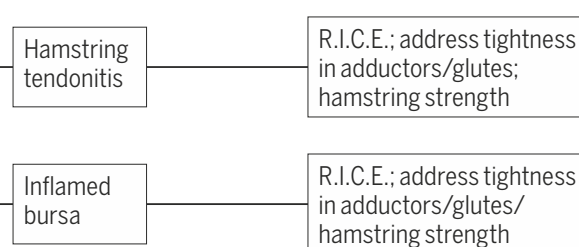
Above patella



Below patella



Posterior (back)



Cycling after cancer

Ten years ago Sally Hurst had a leg amputated due to cancer. Today she rides for Great Britain

Hurst now rides on the track and road and is aiming for Rio 2016

Simon Schofield

Jump on the turbo or unclip out on the road and ride one-legged for a little while. Don't drop the pace — and start counting.

Unless you're used to these drills and do plenty of them, by the time you hit 60 seconds you'll be begging for mercy. Welcome to Sally Hurst's world. "I can keep up with able-bodied riders. I just have to work a bit harder," says Hurst, a mistress of the understatement.

At 26, and with persistent knee pain, Hurst, a fit and active woman who swam, danced and rode a horse, was diagnosed with an aggressive form of osteosarcoma — bone cancer — in her right leg.

She underwent three cycles of chemotherapy — "as horrific as you imagine, but actually a little bit worse" — but it failed to arrest the tumour. "They told me that it had killed about two per cent of it. The whole tumour actually got bigger during treatment."

With no other option, Hurst had to have her leg amputated. "I was devastated," she says. "Normally you go into an operation hoping for some improvement at the other end. I went down for mine knowing that my life was going to change forever."

Hurst then endured six cycles of chemo to ensure the cancer was gone.

For the seven years that followed Hurst says she was "a bit lost". She rebuilt her life, got married and had two children.

"Sport was the last thing on my mind," says Hurst, now 36, and a TV producer for BBC local news in Leeds.

"I put my own things to one side. I had to prove I could be a good mum and like a lot of mums, I had no time for myself.

"My husband and my family were

brilliant. I had so much support and gradually my husband started to say that I should get back to sport."

Hurst's return came by chance after she covered a story about disabled participation in sport after the 2012 Olympics. "I got talking to the British Cycling people and they said they were looking for disabled cyclists. They were particularly interested that I was an above-the-knee amputee because they were short in that category.

"They asked me to try out. I thought they were mad, that I wouldn't stand a chance. I was a 34-year-old mum of two."

Hurst went to Manchester to do a Wattbike power test at the velodrome. "They said my results looked promising."

Encouraged by BC's interest, Hurst pulled a heavy hybrid bike out of the garage. She anchored her prosthetic leg to a toe clip and used a bungee to keep the false limb in place. The first tentative rides were round the block. Next came an expedition to the village down the road. Then 10 miles.

Hurst instantly clicked with cycling. "I was exhausted after the first rides, but the buzz of the exercise had a massive effect on me and how I felt about myself.

Freedom of cycling

"I used to love being outdoors and going fast on my horse. Cycling gave me that back. Walking is still quite hard for me. Cycling gave me my freedom," she says.

Hurst joined Seacroft Wheelers for competitive training and Garforth Velo for the social side. Just 18 months after she rode lashed to the hybrid, Hurst can hold her own with an intermediate group of club riders. With one leg.

"I'm powering a bike from one side. The prosthetic leg gives me a bit of

balance and stability but it gives me virtually no power at all. It's useful for cafe stops and getting on and off the bike — and that's about it," Hurst says.

"Sometimes I drop off the back a bit but I'm not slowing people down. I am working harder than they are to keep up and my good leg is fairly muscly now.

"The prosthetic leg is really dead weight on a bike. In fact I was tested without it and I was much faster!"

When BC advertised for more disabled women riders to join, Hurst applied. So did 100 others, but she made it to the final 10 and was invited into the development squad. That gave her access to coaching, training camps and a programme. It also gave her the sense that people who knew what they were talking about believed in her. "That was so important. To have BC show enthusiasm and interest, and to give me support, has helped me so much and meant a lot."

Hurst's programme now has her riding two two-hour sessions and two three-hour rides on the road weekly, as well as turbo sessions, strength and conditioning work and Pilates for core strength and stability. She is visited regularly by a BC coach. She is riding road and track, and has her sights set on Rio in 2016.

"I haven't specialised yet. I like the track and the road. On the track I ride without the prosthetic leg because a fixed wheel, single-speed bike is a bit easier to control one-legged," she says. "On the road I still use the prosthetic. But I am going to have to ride without it, because in certain categories of competition, including mine, they're not allowed.

"I'm not worried from a performance point of view because it gives me nothing in power terms. But I need to practise the technique of riding without it." ■

The perfect pedal stroke

Sally Hurst's pedal stroke is a thing of rare strength and beauty. It has to be. She cannot afford anything but maximum efficiency as almost every Watt comes from her left leg.

"Smoothness is absolutely key to my pedal stroke. To get every ounce of power I need to focus really hard on the upstroke," she says.

Single-leg drills are an excellent way to practise this. Modern coaches ask riders to think of their pedal stroke as four quadrants.

In the top two quadrants, from 9pm through 12pm to 3pm, riders should

concentrate on kicking lightly over the top, easing the toes forward, and keeping the stroke smooth throughout. In the bottom two quadrants, move the shoe through the dead spot at 6pm by pulling the heel slightly back, again keeping power smooth.

To ensure smoothness, keep the underside of the foot light in the shoe — avoiding a 'stomping' action. Sufferfest, the training video company, has a film called 'Elements of Style' with an excellent demonstration of a smooth pedalling drill.

How it worked for me

■ **Determination**, support from family and friends, the fellowship of club riders and practical help from her local bike shop, Dave Rayner Cycle Sport, have all helped Sally Hurst.

■ **Build up slowly**: Hurst's progression to keeping up with club riders took 18 months. Recovery from illness or injury should always be gradual.

■ **Look for support**: in Hurst's specialised field the support of BC has been essential. But less specialised riders can find help from a coach or a more experienced rider.

Caffeine question

Some drinks may give you a boost but so will carbs and caffeine

Andrew Hamilton

Big-branded energy drinks containing added caffeine are booming; in 2014 alone, net sales of the world's most popular brand exceeded £4 billion! But how do these kinds of drinks stack up in terms of the performance boost they offer, and are they any better at enhancing cycling performance than a simple caffeine supplement?

To answer this, scientists set out to compare the effects of a commercial energy drink (Red Bull) and an equivalent dose of caffeine in tablet form on the performance of 11 trained male cyclists. In this study (a double-blind, placebo-controlled crossover design, — the most rigorous type), the cyclists performed three separate one-hour time trials. Ninety minutes before each trial, they consumed one of the following:

- Red Bull
- Caffeine tablets plus a carbohydrate drink

■ A plain carbohydrate drink. In all three trials the cyclists consumed the same amount of carbohydrate and fluid. In the Red Bull and caffeine tablet trials, the caffeine dose (3mg per kilo of body weight) was identical.

Compared to the carb-only drink trial, the cyclists rode faster when they had taken caffeine. When they took caffeine tablets plus carbohydrate drink, they knocked 120 seconds off their times. Drinking Red Bull resulted in a 109-second improvement. Because these two results were so similar, the researchers concluded that it was the caffeine in the Red Bull that had produced performance gains over a standard carbohydrate drink, and that the other ingredients (e.g. taurine) did not offer any additional benefit.

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2015 Feb 24. [Epub ahead of print]



Great for...

post-ride recovery

Salade niçoise with fresh beans and peas

Proteins are the building blocks of muscle recovery. After a day in the saddle, the body will need a combination of carbohydrates, proteins and fluids to help repair, rebuild and rehydrate. Without adequate protein, the body won't be able to recover efficiently, which could lead to muscular injuries. Protein also helps strengthen the immune system, which is temporarily weakened after exercise so a lack of protein could also leave you vulnerable to illness. This meal is brilliantly healthy and provides a mix of muscle-repairing protein with plenty of omega-3 fatty acids, along with large doses of vitamin C from the peas and beans. It's a perfect immune-system and health-boosting food.

Time taken:
35 mins

METHOD

- 1) Place new potatoes in a medium-sized pan and cover with lightly salted cold water. Bring to the boil then simmer for 10 to 15 minutes until cooked. Drain and set aside.
- 2) While potatoes are cooking, bring a small pan of water to the boil and cook the eggs in the boiling water for seven minutes. When cooked, place under cold running water for five minutes. Peel, cut in half and set aside.
- 3) Bring a medium-sized pan of salted water to the boil, then cook the green beans and peas for two minutes, drain and run under cold water. Drain and set aside.
- 4) Place potatoes, eggs, beans, peas, tuna, olives and anchovy fillets in a medium-sized bowl.
- 5) In a small bowl mix the olive oil, vinegar and shallots then season with pepper.
- 6) Pour the dressing over the salad and mix. Place into four small bowls and serve.

NUTRITION PER SERVING:

348

kcalories

13g

carbohydrates

22.5g

protein

22.9g

fat

INGREDIENTS:

- 200g new potatoes, cut in half
- 4 medium free-range eggs
- 200g fresh green beans, trimmed
- 100g fresh peas, shelled
- 200g tinned tuna, drained
- 12 black olives
- 4 anchovy fillets
- 4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 small shallot, finely chopped
- Cracked black pepper

TAKE HOME TRAINING SESSION

Russian steps

Alternating ever-increasing intervals with ever-decreasing recovery periods is a classic way to boost endurance

Russian steps has long been a favourite with coaches and riders who want to bring a bit of controlled suffering to their training.

Each block lasts eight minutes, but give yourself a full four minutes' recovery before starting again. Aim to repeat this eight-minute block three times during your session. In the first minute, go as hard as you can for 15 seconds, then recover for the remaining 45 seconds to complete the minute. In the second effort, go as hard as you can for 30 seconds, then recover for the next 30 seconds; 45 seconds' effort then 15 seconds' recovery; then go all-out for one minute followed by one minute of recovery. This is the 'top' of the steps. You then begin the descent with 45 seconds' effort with

15 seconds' recovery and repeat the pattern till you complete the set.

This will help train your body to clear lactate. Be sure to keep going all-out in each effort until the end.

This block of eight minutes can be repeated up to three times — don't forget to include a warm-up and warm-down.

Time taken: 8 mins

Time (minutes)	Zone
15 seconds	Z5
45 seconds	Z1
30 seconds	Z5
30 seconds	Z1
45 seconds	Z5
15 seconds	Z1
1 minute	Z5
1 minute	Z1
15 seconds	Z1
45 seconds	Z5
30 seconds	Z1
30 seconds	Z5
45 seconds	Z1
15 seconds	Z5

Effort	You can	It feels like you're...	Use it for...	% Max heart rate	% FT power
Easy Zone 1	Chat freely	Warming up	Warm-ups, cool-downs and recovery	60-65%	56-75%
Steady Zone 2	Speak one sentence at a time	Riding along in the bunch on the flat	Long rides	65-75%	76-90%
Brisk Zone 3	Speak a few words at a time	Breathing deeply and working hard	Long efforts of 10 to 20min	75-82%	91-105%
Hard Zone 4	Say only one word at a time	Really attacking (perhaps on a climb)	Efforts lasting 2-8min	82-89%	106-120%
Very hard Zone 5	G grunt and gasp	Sprinting	Efforts lasting less than 2min	89%-MHR	121%+

Tour de Yorkshire

CW
Difficulty
rating:
8/10

This
year's
event:
May 3

108
km

2,013
metres
ascent

The Tour de France legacy continues with this new Yorkshire sportive

You may have noticed that the Tour de France visited Britain last year, with Yorkshire famously hosting the Grand Départ. Although it means simply 'big start' in French, this title is most appropriate in a county where 'grand' means something special. For 2015 the specialness remains, with the arrival of the Tour de Yorkshire, a UCI approved 2.1 Europe Tour international cycle race, along with the Tour de Yorkshire Ride, a new sportive through some of Yorkshire's

Where is it

The Tour de Yorkshire Ride starts and ends in Leeds — the commercial capital of Yorkshire — dubbed by some as the Knightsbridge of the North. The route takes you up hill and down dale, over some of the famous Yorkshire 'côtes'.

Why ride it

This is a must-do sportive for many reasons: it takes in spectacular Yorkshire landmarks; it overlaps with some Tour de France sections; and with the Tour de Yorkshire pro race on the same route on the same day, the crowds will be out to give you extra encouragement.

History

A few years ago, as a way to attract tourists, Yorkshire pitched to host the Tour de France. Unexpectedly, but deservedly, Yorkshire got the gig and the rest is indeed history — two never-to-be-forgotten days for bike fans and a legacy including a top-class pro race and accompanying sportive.



How to enter

The 108km and 140km routes are now sold out. See right for entry information.

HQ details

Leeds is easy to reach by road (via the M1 or M62), and by train (direct from London and around the country). Roundhay Park is three miles north of Leeds off the A58. Leeds-Bradford airport is also nearby.

Where to stay

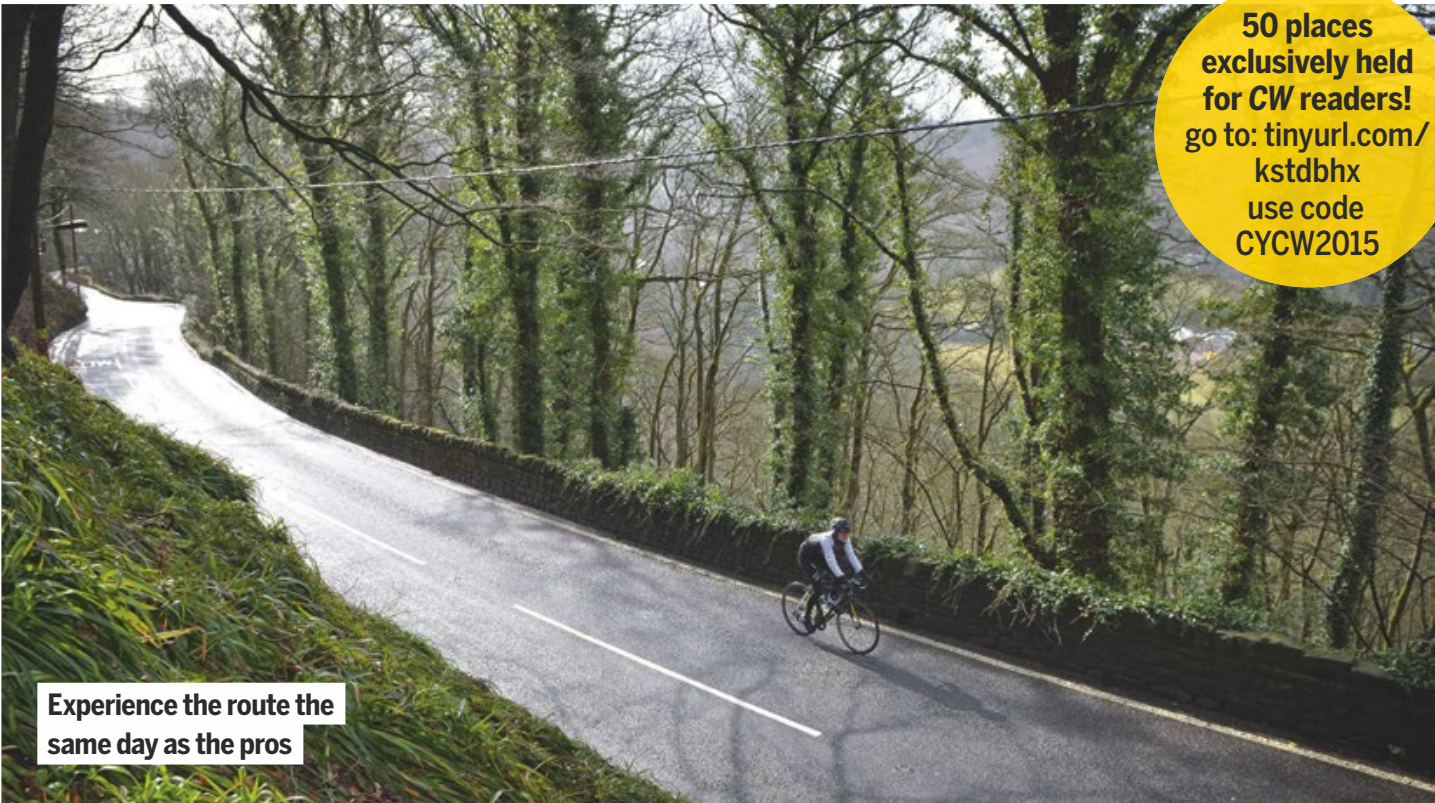
As a major city, Leeds has plenty of places to stay. Central options include the Ibis Hotel and Ibis Budget Hotel. If you're in the area for the weekend and want to sample some of the route, Chevin End Guest House is recommended. Close to the HQ is Beechwood B&B.

Where to eat

For a pre-ride caffeine boost in Roundhay Park, there's the Lakeside Cafe. Options for post-ride celebrations include the Cow and Calf, 15 miles from the park, a great pub-restaurant on the hill out of Ilkley. For a pre-ride carb load there's San Carlo Flying Pizza or the Roundhay Fox.

Local bike shop

A Leeds classic is Woodrup Cycles (www.woodrupcycles.com) while out of town options include award-winning Chevin Cycles in Otley (www.chevincycles.com).



finest landscapes, where ordinary cyclists can ride the same roads, and same hills, as the pros.

Just as the 2014 Tour rolled out of Leeds, the Tour de Yorkshire sportive begins in the same city. Roundhay Park to be exact. You can expect it to be crowded on May 3 with over 5,500 riders all eager to get moving, as all three routes (140, 108 and 50km) use the same roads.

We followed the route along Alwoodley Lane by Eccup Reservoir, and then took the wheeltracks of last year's Tour riders for a few miles, as they tootled along after their VIP reception at Harewood House. No such luxury for sportive riders. The route cuts south and goes over a famous local hill called the Chevin. It's a stiff little climb, but the real test is on the way back, so save your energy here.

From the top of the Chevin, there's a descent to the town of Menston, then the route enters a more rural setting, winding its way between classic drystone walls along the south side of that famous Yorkshire landmark, Ilkley Moor. The long and medium distance options split at Cullingworth. Long-route riders will head south for a tough loop

through the hills via Hebden Bridge, while we followed the medium route westwards to reach another great Yorkshire location, Haworth.

Let the climbing commence

Haworth is famous as the home of the Brontë sisters, and cycling fans will remember its cobbled climb on stage two of last year's Tour, which sportive riders will tackle. Haworth is also where the medium distance sportive joins the Tour de Yorkshire race route. Riders need an average speed of 12mph minimum to ensure they're off the course an hour before the pros arrive.

But don't panic. Take a breather at the top, drop down through Oakworth, and prepare to tackle the steepest climb of the day: a very stiff section up a narrow little road called Goose Eye. This is a killer, and there's not much respite on the next few miles as the route crosses the rolling moors, through Silsden and Addingham, to reach Ilkley and another major climb, the Cow and Calf.

With a good few miles in our legs by this point, the Cow and Calf seemed relentless, but local cyclist Jonathan Hunt of Ilkley CC gave us this advice: "You'll definitely need some Yorkshire grit here. It's a hill you want to avoid, but when you get to the top you won't regret it. And don't forget to look up; the views are amazing."

Our legs were like jelly, but you may be built of sterner stuff and might cruise up here. However, don't forget you've still got to cross the Chevin again before the finish. Even here, we found it paid to keep a drop of fuel in the tank for one final climb at Black Hill Road with about 10 miles to go.

Then it's over. On the day of the sportive, you'll trace the outward route back to Roundhay Park to cross the finish line and collect your medal. Yorkshire roads are definitely hard roads, but Yorkshire cycling is undeniably grand.

TARGET TIMES				
Route	Award	Distance	Ave speed	Time
Long	Gold	87	>19 mph	< 4hr 36 min
Long	Silver	87	>16mph	< 5hr 27 min
Long	Bronze	87	>12 mph	< 7hr 15 min
Medium	Gold	67	>19 mph	< 3hr 32 min
Medium	Silver	67	>16 mph	< 4hr 12 min
Medium	Bronze	67	>12 mph	< 5hr 36 min
Short	Gold	31	>19 mph	< 1hr 38 min
Short	Silver	31	>16 mph	< 1hr 56 min
Short	Bronze	31	>12 mph	< 2hr 35 min

1 Haworth Main Street This cobbled section is under half a mile with a gradient of around seven per cent, made harder because it's bumpy and often slippery. The local advice is: low gear, sit down, pedal smoothly.

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2 Cow and Calf

Rising out of Ilkley, this climb is not too steep (only around six per cent) but at two miles long, by the mid point of the ride, it'll definitely be a test of your endurance.

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3 Chevin

The route crosses the Chevin twice, with Chevin East Road the tougher of the two ascents. If you kept something back, you'll cruise it. But with 50 miles in your legs, prepare to suffer.

3 Chevin

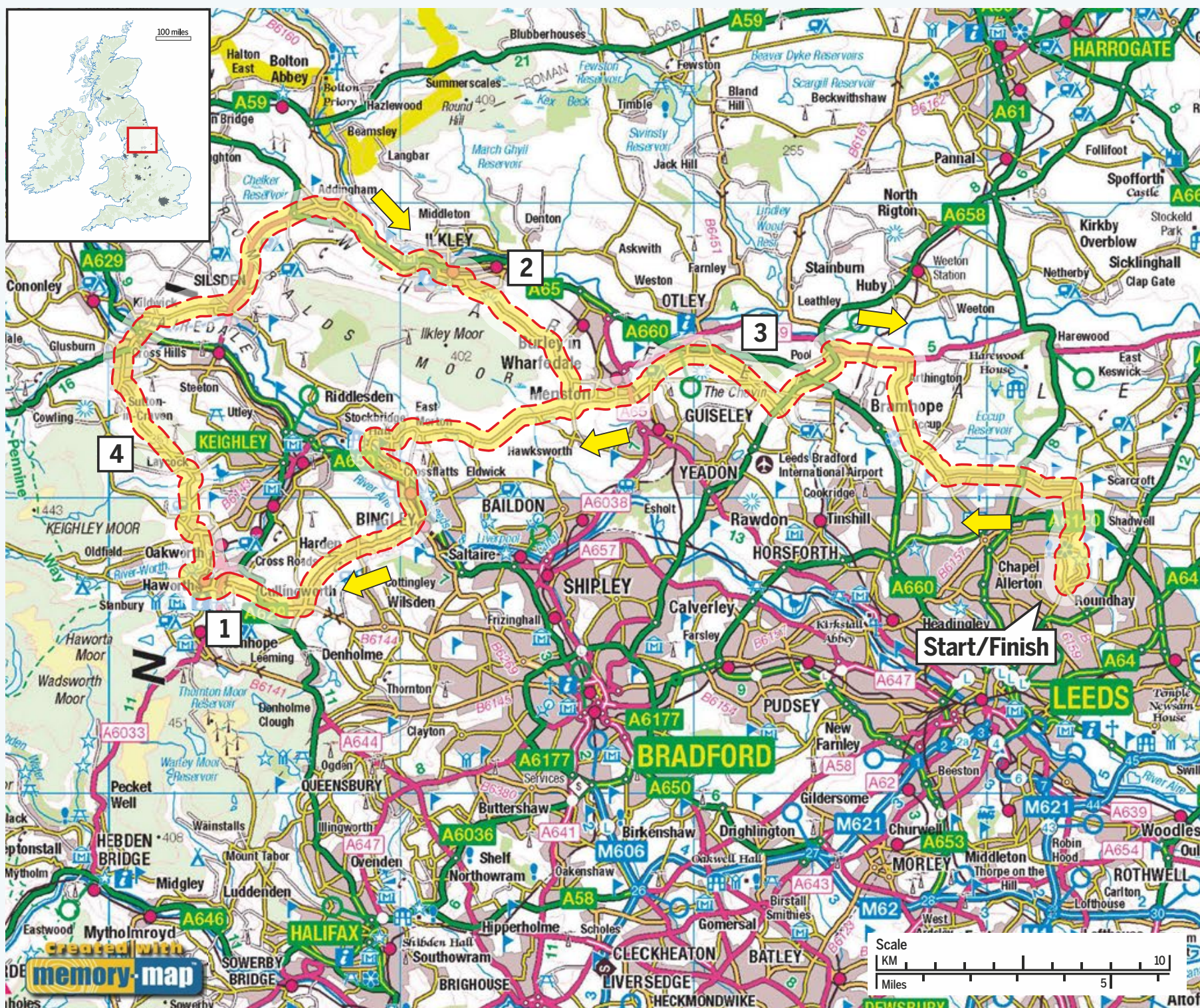
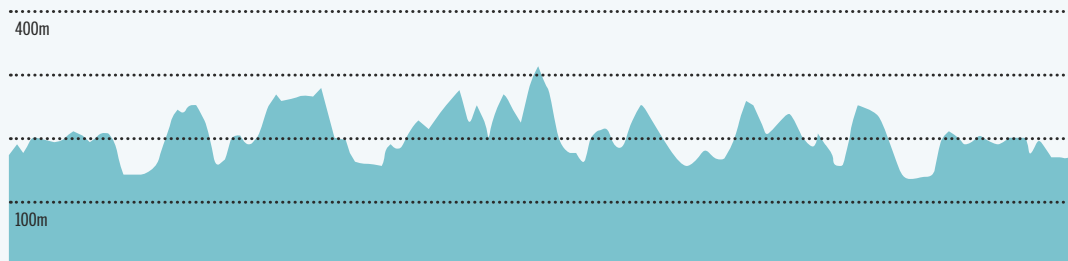
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4 Goose Eye

The hardest climb on the sportive is a narrow little road called Goose Eye. This becomes Game Scar Lane, where the 20 per cent gradient rears up between canyon-like retaining walls and takes you round some savage hairpins. For a few days in May this is the Côte de Goose Eye (along with Côte de Cow and Calf and Côte de Chevin, of course). Even when you reach the top the pain isn't over, as the route keeps climbing for another two miles up Green Sykes Road. Try to look relaxed as you pass the crowds waiting for the pro race.

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Event website and for GPX file www.letour.yorkshire.com/tour-de-yorkshire/sportive

Dulwich Paragon Cycling Club

Rebecca Charlton heads out for a rainy ride with the biggest club in Britain

Bucking the trend of Sunday club runs, the all-inclusive ride out to the lanes is on the first day of the weekend for South London's Dulwich Paragon. Hang around the hub of cafes at the top of Crystal Palace long enough and you'll see a blue swarm of riders cresting Anerley Hill come rain, shine or snow. The kit's had a revamp in recent years but it stays true to its signature hue.

Despite a forecast of heavy rain we were looking forward to visiting the largest cycling club in the UK that has led the way in so many respects since it was founded in 1935.

The weather app was true to its word and we rolled over to Herne Hill Velodrome in a downpour on a Saturday morning to find a few club members sheltering outside the hut. But then another group appeared, then another.

"Sorry there's not more people out this morning. The wind and rain has put people off," shouted club secretary David Joss Buckley as he walks over to greet us.

It looked like a pretty healthy turnout to us. "There's usually about 150 people out when the weather's good," explained Buckley. "One sportive organiser said

that you couldn't swing a dead cat without hitting a Dulwich Paragon member."

Libby Gordon was the next to come over, explaining that her Garmin mount was a Christmas present to herself to match her new BMC. We hoped our legs would be up to the pace, as we knew the female contingent of the club includes a pretty handy racing team.

Women have been an important part of the Dulwich Paragon ever since it was founded and still today they are offered free membership in their first year.

"Our women's secretary, Charly Roberage, has played a really big role in the increase in women's activities in the last 18 months," Gordon told us. "She's been especially encouraging to those thinking about racing and ensuring the committee put investment into the women's side of things."

Blue crew

Each month the Paragon offers a non-members' ride for prospective club riders to get a taste of what it's like

Club facts

Based: Dulwich, London

Members: 700

Formed: 1935

Meets: Club ride Sat: 9am-2pm: Herne Hill Velodrome (meet at 08.30am); Sunday club run: 9am-1pm: Cafe St Germain: 70-80 miles at a sporting pace (17+mph); Thursday Fast chaingang training: 7:00pm-8:30pm: Elmers End Roundabout: 21-22mph; There are various other women's-only chaingangs and track training throughout the week for different abilities. See website for details.

to head out with the crew in blue. Club rides and sportives secretary Gary MacGowan briefed everybody before we rolled out in two groups. "Double up when the roads allow it but be careful of strong crosswinds," he said.

It was a typical route out of the smoke on a beaten track which will be familiar to many South Londoners, starting with a climb up over Crystal Palace — a real leg-stretcher.

We filtered through the group, meeting a theatre

History

Delving into the history of Dulwich Paragon, it's easy to see why it's the obvious choice for so many riders in this part of the country. It welcomed women members when it founded in 1935, unlike many clubs, which were often male only.

Head to any local race at Herne Hill Velodrome or regular road race circuits such as Hillingdon or the Kent Velo Park and you'll always see a large number of club members out in force and the race pedigree goes way back to the start. Wally Gimber was a fan of the Dulwich Paragon during his reign on the track in the 1950s and 1960s, holding national records and beating world champion Reg Harris. He donated the Wally Gimber trophy for what

became the club's flagship road race and this year is the 55th consecutive running, making it among the longest established races in the country. Sir Bradley Wiggins is a former winner.

In the 1980s the club had around 30 members; it's now far outgrown most other clubs in terms of membership take-up.

Continuing with a list of members including a historical who's who of cycling, Claud Butler was once a club president.

The club made history when in 1938, Jimmy Starling started organised circuit races at Brooklands on a small part of the motor racing track. Club general secretary David Joss Buckley has written an account of the club's history through the war years

from 1939-45 which you can read in full on the Paragon website.

Achievements

In the 1950s Dulwich member Jack Hearn was a national speed skater and was selected for the Great Britain Olympic team.

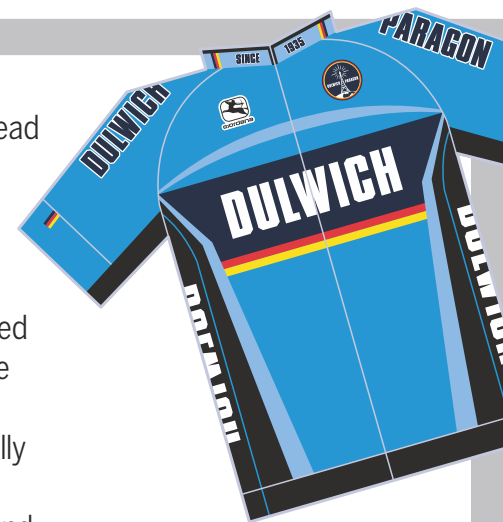
Currently the Paragon officially stands as the largest club in the country, with membership around 700, including over 100 women.

John Greatwood is the club's most successful rider to date, winning numerous road races and time trials in the 1960s, including the classic Bath Road 100.

The Ride of the Falling Leaves is the club's annual autumn sportive, raising money each year for the Lavender Trust breast cancer charity. It's become

known as the 'sportive aficionados' event on the cycling calendar.

On the note of cycling-related trivia, and proving the diversity of the Paragon, club members have recently won medals at the Brompton World Championships. Truly multi-discipline!





Dulwich Paragon club run

Ride highlights

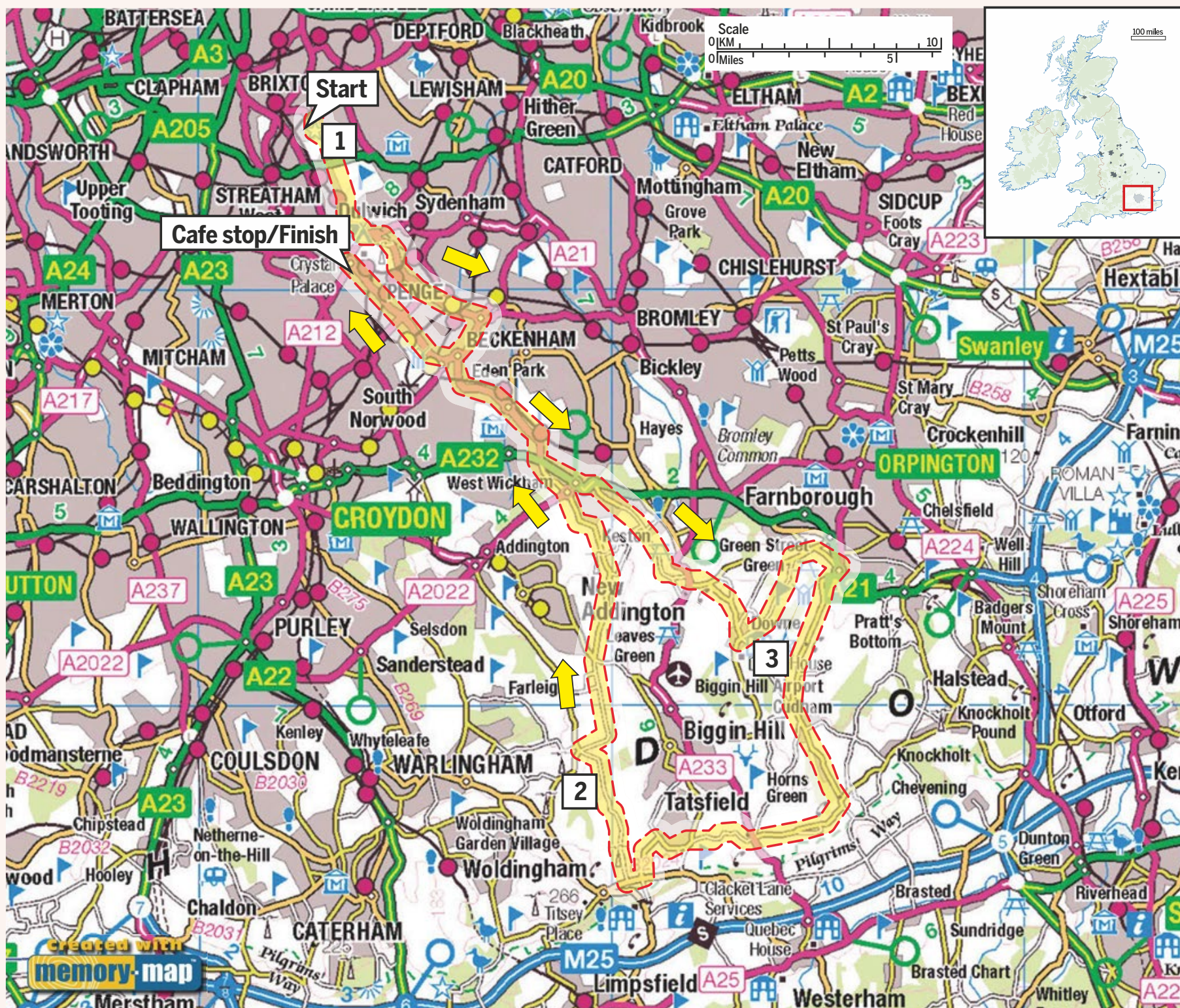
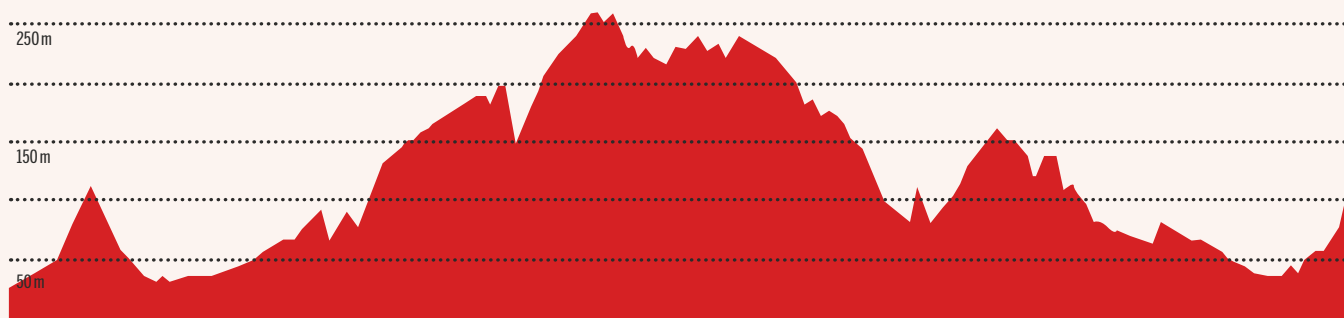
1 Herne Hill Velodrome
The Saturday riders congregate at the 1948 Olympic venue, Herne Hill Velodrome. There are also lots of routes into track racing with the Dulwich.

2 Beddleshead Hill
Taking on Beddleshead Hill and the gradual rise of Layhams Lane you'll ride on some of Kent's best climbs, at a range of gradients and beautiful lanes.

3 Downe
Downe is steeped in history, Evolutionary theorist Charles Darwin lived in Down House for 40 years, from 1842 until he died there in 1882.

Favourite cafes

True to the 'can't swing a dead cat' reference, the Dulwich Paragon can be seen frequenting a number of cafes around Crystal Palace and Herne Hill, including the old meeting spot of Cafe St Germain. However, another popular choice is Cadence Cycling Performance hub where you'll find good food, coffee, sports nutrition plus you can take your bike inside or hang by the window safe in the knowledge it's in sight. There's a range of other facilities here too. Cadence Cycling Performance Centre (2a Anerley Hill, Crystal Palace, London SE19 2AA; tel 020 8676 8825; www.cadenceperformance.com).





Cafes do a roaring trade when Dulwich come out to play



Great atmosphere, great cycling



The boys in blue fresh back from the fray

producer who politely urged us to “go ahead” on the hills (we couldn’t) and club members old and new.

Rahal Goonewardene was hovering at the back making sure no one got left behind. “My mum is blind so she used to ride a tandem and we’d go out with her as kids,” he said. “I’d always cycled and when I moved to South London the Paragon were

right on my doorstep.”

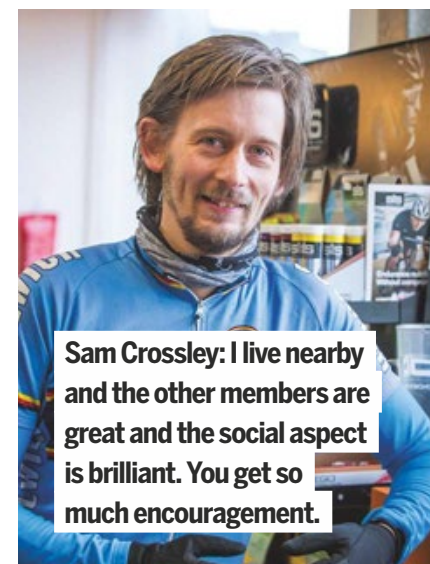
What would he say to non-club members? “Just do it, come along, then hopefully we move people up from that introductory ride into the faster groups. Even if they find it hard the first time, they keep coming back. We want accessibility, that’s what the club has done so well.”

One puncture, a soaking to

the core, plenty of laughs and the offer of a discreet comfort break later we made the final ascent to Cadence Cafe.

This club is steeped in history and has plenty to offer for those passionate about track, road or time trials, and as officially the largest cycle club in the UK, they’re clearly doing something right. ■

Meet the club



Sam Crossley: I live nearby and the other members are great and the social aspect is brilliant. You get so much encouragement.



Libby Gordon: I was looking for a club that had a number of women in it because I was sick of riding with just men!



Rahal Goonewardene: I’ve made some really good friends, the group rides are excellent and I’ve become the membership secretary.



Catherine Morris: I signed up for the annual sportive and never left! Pretty much all my friends are in the Dulwich now.

Contact dulwichparagon.com | Twitter @dulwichparagon @paragonette

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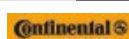
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Michaelgate

Lincoln, England

Simon Warren

It's going to be a special year for the diminutive cobbled climb of Michaelgate, in the centre of Lincoln. The traditional focus of the Lincoln Grand Prix will this year decide the National Road Race title on June 28. It's never easy to find the base of this climb, and there is often confusion as to which way to ride once you reach the summit, so study the maps carefully before you head off to avoid getting horribly lost.

Momentum is everything

Michaelgate is of course so special because of its cobbles. Add this to its relationship with the Lincoln GP, and you have one of the most famous, hallowed ascents in the whole of Britain; a real test of man and machine.

When you first hit the cobbles, take as much momentum from the tarmac as you can. Remain seated for greater traction and relax your body as you bounce over the jagged surface. Always

CW
Difficulty
rating:
4/10

keep an eye up ahead for wandering pedestrians, especially as you reach the junction with Steep Hill, where you head left (straight on is no entry), finishing the ascent at the junction with Drury Lane.



Michaelgate: 260m
of cobbled torture

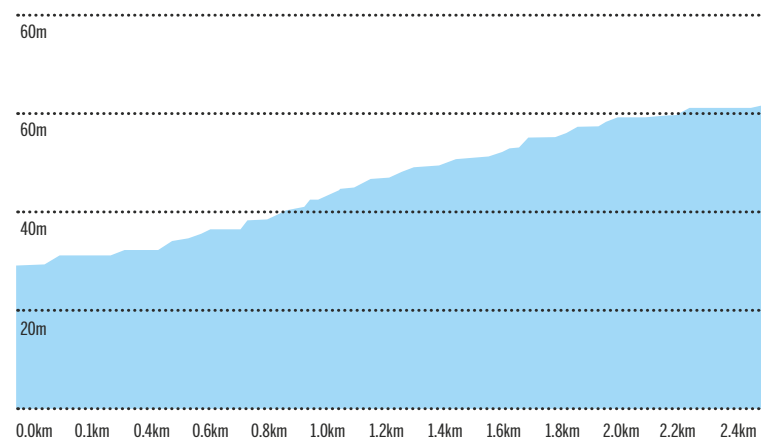
The stats

WHERE Enter Lincoln and find the B1308, Clasketgate. Head east and turn right onto Motherby Lane then left onto Hungate. As Hungate turns into Spring Hill, turn right onto Michaelgate.

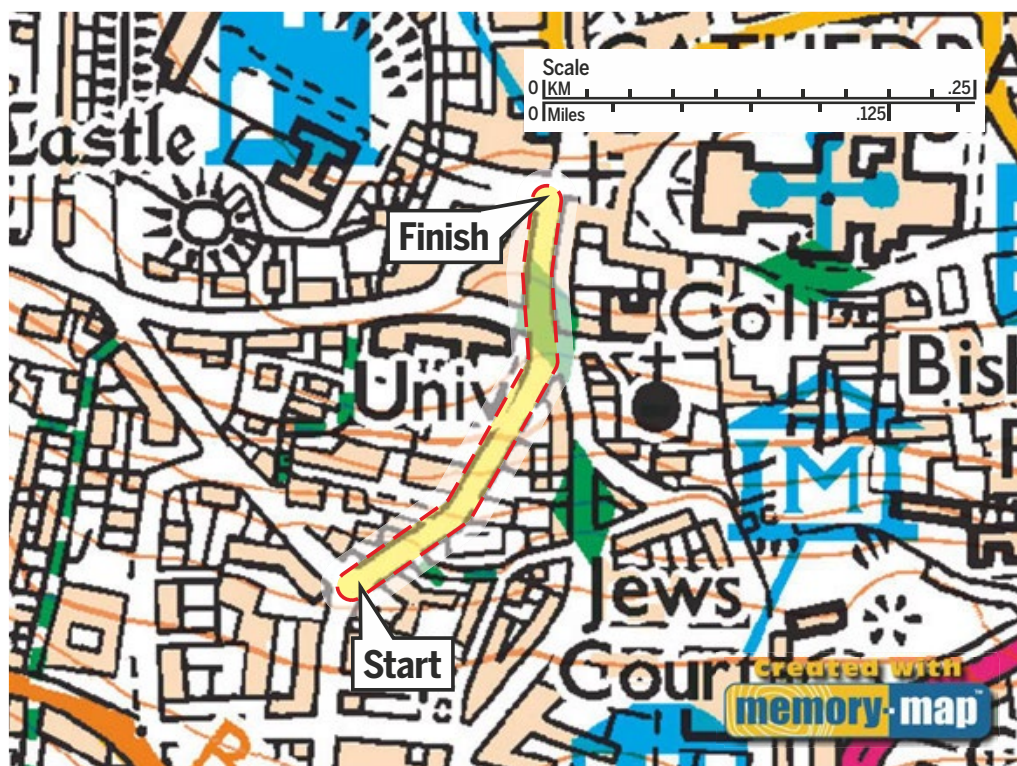


KOM Top Tip There's a foot of smooth stones between the cobbles and footpath; it takes skill to ride but it's much faster.

260m	62m	34m	11%	17%
Length	Summit height	Height gain	Average gradient	Max gradient



Strava file: www.strava.com/segments/6691237



Porte tops the Paris-Nice podium

Sky's early-season form continues to flourish

Words: Kenny Pryde Photos: Cor Vos

Richie Porte is back. After a grim 2014 the Tasmanian now sits at the top of the WorldTour rankings following his Paris-Nice win.

Two stages and the GC add to his 2015-winning tally and suggest he is now ready to step back into the shoes of Grand Tour leader at this year's Giro.

Porte, claiming to be two kilos lighter than he was last time he won here, said: "I was a little bit nervous going into the day [the time trial]. Geraint [Thomas] and I threw time away yesterday — we were in a fantastic position, and for both of us to crash like we did wasn't ideal.

"It means a lot to me to be a two-time winner of an iconic race like Paris-Nice, and this one feels even sweeter than the last one because it was so hard. They threw everything at us yesterday [Vence to Nice], and to win on the top of the Col d'Eze this year, like I did in 2013, is incredible. It's good because we had a roller-coaster season last year and we're definitely back now."

The 'we' is both rider and team and, with no Sir Bradley Wiggins to

complicate the summer team selections, Porte is Giro bound, this time as leader.

Whoever makes up the nine-man team around him will be no 'B-team' as Sky are firing on all cylinders this season. Sir Dave Brailsford said at the beginning of this year that Sky would aim to become the greatest sports team in the world — a bold claim after a poor 2014 campaign. He is now looking true to his word.

The Paris-Nice victory follows on from Ian Stannard's success in Het Nieuwsblad, Chris Froome winning Ruta del Sol, Geraint Thomas the Tour of the Algarve, as well as Porte's own stage wins at the Tour Down Under and in the Algarve.

To emphasise the point that Sky have turned things around, even when Sky's big chief Chris Froome was a non-starter in Tirreno-Adriatico due to a chest infection, unheralded new signing Wout Poels ended up winning a tough stage and briefly leading overall. And at the Tour of Langkawi, Sebastian Henao finished third overall. If Team Sky win nothing else till, say, July, you can't say that they failed this spring.



Philippe Gilbert leads the way on stage six



Tasmanian battles on toughest day



Porte on the podium





105

Finishers from the 160 started

59kg

Porte's weight in kilos, two lighter than in 2013

0.031

Michal Kwiatkowski's winning margin in the prologue

43

Number of abandons/DNS on stage five

Results

Prologue: Maurepas-Maurepas, 6.7km

Winner: Michal Kwiatkowski

The world road race champion beat world Hour record holder Rohan Dennis and world time trial champion Bradley Wiggins by 0.03 and 15 secs.

Stage one: Saint-Rémy-lès-Chevreuse-Contres, 192km

Winner: Alexander Kristoff

After breakaway duo Anthony Delaplace (Bretagne-Séché) and Thomas Voeckler (Europcar) were caught, Alexander Kristoff emerged to win. Tom Boonen crashed.

Stage two: Zoo Parc de Beauval-Saint-Amand-Montrond, 172km

Winner: André Greipel

Greipel won on another sprinters' stage on another day when Bretagne-Séché made a solo breakaway.

Stage three: Saint-Amand-Montrond-Saint-Pourçain-sur-Sioule, 179km

Winner: Michael Matthews

This wasn't one for the pure sprinters, which gave Matthews his chance. The Orica rider took it and the overall lead.

Stage four: Varennes-sur-Allier-Croix de Chaubouret, 204km

Winner: Richie Porte

The race hit the hills and saw Sky duo Porte and Geraint Thomas finish one-two with a series of strong attacks which gapped erstwhile leader Matthews, who lost 14 minutes. Kwiatkowski was back in the lead.

Stage five: St Etienne-Rasteau, 192km

Winner: Davide Cimolai

Cimolai gave Lampre-Merida something to smile about. Solo breakaway Thomas De Gendt was caught inside 300 metres to go.

Stage six: Vence-Nice, 181km

Winner: Tony Gallopin

Lotto's Frenchman won the toughest stage of the race with a bold 30km solo attack which also saw him take the race lead. A cold, wet day saw over 40 abandons, Porte and Thomas both crash, and Kwiatkowski crack.

Stage seven: Col d'Eze time trial, 9.6km

Winner: Richie Porte

Even with a lead of 34 seconds, it was going to be hard for Gallopin to hold off Porte and so it proved. The suspense over the outcome lasted till 5.5km to the first time check when Porte went through fastest. Gallopin followed, having lost 58 seconds, the race over-all and his place on the podium.

Paris-Nice, overall

1. Richie Porte (Team Sky)

29:11:24; 2. M. Kwiatkowski (Etixx-Quick Step) +0:30; 3. S. Spilak (Katusha) +0:30; 4. R. Costa (Lampre) +0:30; 5. G. Thomas (Team Sky) +0:41; 6. T. Gallopin (Lotto-Soudal) +1:03; 7. J. Fuglsang (Astana) +1:05; 8. R. Valls (Lampre) +1:24; 9. G. Izaguirre (Movistar) +1:38; 10. T. Wellens (Lotto-Soudal) +2:18.



McLay's first WorldTour

Riding his first ever World-Tour race, Bretagne Séché Environnement's new pro Dan McLay scored an eighth place on stage five, but he wasn't getting carried away: "The race was hard but not completely different from other races," said McLay (left). "The breaks that went away went easy because nobody wanted to be in them and it wasn't very windy on the flat days either. Everyone can climb pretty well though!"

The 23-year-old McLay got his eighth place on a lumpy day with a third-category climb in the finale, where he found he was going well.

"After the first couple of days I ended up doing my own thing in the sprints, but I was getting boxed in and lacked confidence. I look at that result and think I could have done a bit better. I was more pleased that I was climbing better and still in the group when guys were getting dropped, because I'm usually one of those guys," laughed McLay.

After 24 race days already this season, McLay's next events are the Grand Prix Cholet and the Scheldeprijs before tackling Paris-Roubaix. "And then I'll take a week off." Which seems reasonable...

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Double joy for Pedal Heaven and JLT

Pedal Heaven RT and JLT Condor got their domestic road race seasons up and running with weekend doubles.

After the early successes enjoyed by One Pro Cycling and NFTO, it was time for the other teams to show their hands and Pedal Heaven pressed their claim to be the country's top non-UCI registered team with Rory Townsend taking victory in Surrey while David McGowan came out on top in Worcestershire.

Third in the Jock Wadley Memorial race a week earlier, 19-year-old Townsend underlined his talent by winning the 87-mile Peter Young Memorial at Chobham in a sprint with David Creeggan giving Pedal Heaven a 1-2.

Already with three top 10 finishes this season, McGowan beat local favourite Ben Stockdale (SportGrub Kuota) by the tightest of margins in the Evesham Vale road race at Inkberrow.

Riding on his local South

Yorkshire roads, Graham Briggs bounced back from illness to win the Danum Trophy for the second time after a race-long battle with Ben Hetherington (Achieve Northside Skinnergate) as JLT Condor filled three of the first four places.

Richard Handley delivered JLT Condor's second victory in the Angela Davies Memorial at Aberystwyth ahead of Stephen Williams of Pedal Heaven RT, whose excellent weekend also included a second place for Will Fox behind Tom Neale (Catford CC Equipe Banks) in a sprint finish to the Roy Thame Cup in Buckinghamshire.

In time trialling, Matt Bottrill (drag2zero.com) broke his third course record in three weeks when he won the A5 Rangers 31 near Towcester, Northamptonshire, with a time of 1:07.24 on Saturday.

Beating his own mark, Bottrill nearly caught second placed Andy Jackson (Team Swift) on the line as he was more than four and a half minutes quicker despite cold winds making for a challenging two laps.

And in the Bath CC hilly 24 in Wiltshire, Rob Pears (Procyling RT) took victory with 57.30, but all riders had to contend with temporary traffic lights on the course which meant an extra timekeeper noting how long each rider was delayed for. Pears took the win by 44 seconds from Dean Robson (Cheltenham and County CC).

Road racing

Sunday, March 15

Evesham Vale Road Race (Inkberrow, Worcestershire):

E, 1, 2, 3: 1 David McGowan (Pedal Heaven RT) 62 miles in 2:30.00; 2. B. Stockdale (SportGrub Kuota RT); 3. D. Appleby (NFTO); 4. Z. May (NFTO); 5. A. Moreno-Sala (Velosure Starley Primal); 6. D. Jelfs (Madison Genesis); 7. E. Rowsell (Madison Genesis); 8. L. Holohan (Madison Genesis); 9. J. Hoy (NFTO); 10. M. Clarke (Wheelbase Altura MGD).

Danum Trophy Road Race (High Melton, South Yorkshire):

E, 1, 2, 3: 1. Graham Briggs (JLT Condor) 60 miles in 2:19.46; 2. B. Hetherington (Achieve Northside Skinnergate); 3. J. Moses (JLT Condor); 4. H. Tanfield (JLT Condor); 5. D. Byrne (Champion Systems VCUK); 6. J. Walker (RST Racing Team); 7. A. Didelot (Team Vertex); 8. C. Swift (Team Polypipe); 9. A. Proctor (Team Envelopemaster-Bike Box Alan); 10. T. Moses (JLT Condor).

Peter Young Memorial (Chobham, Surrey):

E, 1, 2, 3: Rory Townsend (Pedal Heaven RT); 2. D. Creeggan (Pedal Heaven RT); 3. W. Goulbourne (Corley Cycles); 4. T. Neale (Catford CC Equipe); 5. A. Murison (Easton Ritte); 6. A. Gibb (CSE Racing); 7. M. Clarke (London Dynamo); 8. B. Marks (Cycleworks.co.uk); 9. G. Wood (Richardsons Trek); 10. A. Syme (Primera Sports).

Saturday, March 14

Roy Thame Cup (Buckingham, Buckinghamshire):

E, 1, 2: 1. Tom Neale (Catford CC Equipe Banks) 120km in 3:09.00; 2. W. Fox (Pedal Heaven RT); 3. R. Howells (Richardsons Trek RT); 4. E. Clemens (Spirit Bikes RT); 5. R. Townsend (Pedal Heaven RT); 6. N. Edmondson (Giordana-Mitsubishi Electric RT); 7. J. Caldwell (Richardsons Trek RT); 8. R. Ward (Danny Sane-Storck Racing); 9. B. Stockdale (SportGrub Kuota RT); 10. S. Holt (Pedal Heaven RT) all at same time.

Spring Chicken Road Race (Buckingham, Buckinghamshire):

3, 4: 1. Luke Smith (Whyte Bikes); 2. J. Roberts (Zappi's RT); 3. S. Oxenham (VC 10); 4. M. Blake (Banbury Star CC); 5. K. Chandler (Watford Velo-Sport); 6. P. Martin (WyndyMilla); 7. C. Manko (Spirit Bikes); 8. A. Colsell (High Wycombe CC); 9. D. Marett (GS Henley) 10. Z. Corum-Haines (Project 51).

Sunday, March 8

Dona Bici March Sprinter (Llandow circuit):

E, 1, 2: 1. Zach May (NFTO Race Club); 2. J. Lewis (NFTO); 3. J. Wiltshire (NFTO); 4. D. Cutterham (Army Cycling Union); 5. A. Hutchinson (VC St Raphael); 6. J. Holt (County Cycles); 7. R. Williams (Swansea Univ CC); 8. E. Georgi (Giant CC); 9. J. Eldridge (NFTO Race Club); 10. J. Harcourt (Urban Cyclery).
2, 3: 1. Andy Hoskins (Cardiff JIF); 2. P. Jones (NFTO Race Club); 3. J. Burns (Velosure Starley Primal); 4. W. Roberts (County Cycles); 5. J. Harcourt (Urban Cyclery); 6. R. Williams (Swansea Univ CC); 7. A. Hutchinson (VC St Raphael); 8. J. Eldridge (NFTO Race Club); 9. K. McIlquham (Cardiff JIF); 10. H. Evans (NFTO Race Club).
3, 4: 1. Ashton St Hill (Forza Cycles); 2. S.

Meek (Cardiff JIF); 3. W. Roberts (County Cycles); 4. K. Bond (Ystwyth CC); 5. M. Cox (BDCS); 6. K. McIlquham (Cardiff JIF); 7. T. Vale (Swansea Univ CC); 8. I. Bullar (Gannet CC); 9. G. Jones (CDRC); 10. M. Tarling (West Wales CRT).

4th Cat: 1. Stuart Gourley (Radeon CC); 2. A. Peel (Cardiff Ajax); 3. L. Perrot (Swansea Wheelers); 4. A. Wagg (Cardiff Ajax); 5. H. Balding (Cardiff Ajax); 6. S. Utting (Cardiff Ajax); 7. L. Geoghegan (Cardiff Univ Marmots); 8. M. Fitzgibbon (Newport Olympic); 9. S. Williams (Acme Wh Rhondda); 10. T. Hanson (Swansea Univ CC).

Women: 1. Amy Hill (Team Rytger); 2. M. Chard (M&D Cycles); 3. S. Williams (Cardiff JIF); 4. H. James (On It Sports); 5. M. Backstedt (Maindy Flyers); 6. S. Wylie-Morris (M&D Cycles); 7. J. Rees (Cardiff JIF); 8. G. Hughes (County Cycles); 9. J. Lloyd (Cwmcaron Paragon); 10. J. Horton (unattached).

Youth Boys: Under-16: James Tillet (Cardiff JIF).

Under-14 Boys: Zach Bridges (Cardiff JIF).

Under-12 Boys: Joshua Tarling (West Wales CRT).

Under-10 Boys: Daniel Wylie-Morris (M&D Cycles).

Under-8s: Charlie Beckett (Cardiff JIF).

Youth Girls: Under-16s: Georgia Bailey (Newport Olympic).

Under-14s: Elynor Backstedt (Maindy Flyers).

Under-12s: Isabella Escalera (VC Londres).

Under-10s: Lowri Richards (West Wales CRT).

Under-8s: Hawys Richards (West Wales CRT).

Time trials

Sunday, March 15

PMR@Toachim House 25 (Harrietsham, Kent):

Solo: 1. Mike Piper (Abellio SFA RT) 56.46
2. S. Bradford (PMR@Toachim House) 57.06
3. S. Berry (Arctic Tacx RT) 57.48
4. K. Hatch (Abellio SFA RT) 59.13
5. S. Henderson (Thanet RC) 59.27
6. P. Smith (Velo Refined) 1:01.10
7. M. Gore (Medway Velo) 1:01.37
8. M. Doxey (Abellio SFA RT) 1:01.37
9. L. Russell (VC Elan) 1:01.56
10. I. Bashford (Old Portlians CC) 1:03.50
Men 2-up: 1. Malcolm Davies and Nick Malins (4T+RT) 56.17
2. N. Wilson and Steve Gooch (Rye Wheelers) 58.04
3. R. Smith and Keith Walker (Wigmore CC) 59.50
Women 2-up: 1. Louise Mason and Sally Smith (Medway Velo) 1:07.54

Rider of the week

Tejvan Pettinger (Sri Chinmoy)

Tejvan Pettinger broke Gethin Butler's 17-year-old record in the Circuit of Ingleborough in Yorkshire on Saturday, and then also set a new mark in the Ilkley CC 10 on the V810 on Sunday.



Pedal Heaven enjoyed a divine weekend



Photo: Dave Hayward, Andy Jones

Snowdon Sports supply domestic results and reports to Cycling Weekly. Please send your information to results@snowdons.co.uk or call 0114 232 5555 and we will do our best to include them in our expanded racing section.

Performance of the week

Tom Neale (Catford CC-Equipe Banks)

After winning the Roy Thame Cup on Saturday in a close sprint, 21-year-old Tom Neale shrugged off a crash and battled to fourth spot in Sunday's Peter Young Memorial.



Southern Counties CU 21 (Bletchingley, Surrey):

1. Steve Dennis (East Grinstead CC)	53.54
2. W. Hayter (London Dynamo)	54.20
3. P. Wright (Paceline RT)	54.44
4. C. Yates (East Grinstead CC)	55.54
5. S. Kane (Team ASL360)	57.13
6. R. Tully (Elite Cycling)	57.44
7. R. Drake (Addiscombe CC)	57.47
8. A. Blacker (Norwood Paragon CC)	58.11
9. J. Griffin (Kingston Wheelers CC)	58.53
10. D. Churchill (Bigfoot CC)	59.30
Women: Alice Lethbridge (gbcycles.co.uk)	1:00.37
Veteran on Target Time: Steve Dennis (East Grinstead CC)	+03.00

A5 Rangers 10 (Towcester, Northants):

1. J. Little (VC St Raphael)	21.36
2. R. Hancock (St Neots CC)	22.18
3. S. Wright (Planet X)	22.41
4. M. Ellis (Team Milton Keynes)	23.23
5= P. Wright (Rugby RCC)	23.24
5= R. Kenworthy (Leisurelakesbikes.com)	23.24
7. G. Martin (A5 Rangers)	24.10
8. G. Ashley (Team Jewson)	24.29
9. A. Taverna (St Neots CC)	25.05
10. P. Scott (Rugby RCC)	25.13

Team: St Neots CC.

Mike Lumb Memorial Trophy: Graham Martin

Points over two days: 1. Greg Ashley 172 points; 2. S. Wright 171; 3. P. Trotman 161.

Medium Gear: 1. Gavin Hinxman

(Kettering CC)	24.55
2. R. Hutt (Harp RC)	25.43
3. N. Barford (45 Road Club)	27.16
4. M. Scothern (Vegetarian AC)	27.26
5. T. Watson (Bossard Wheelers)	30.40
6. D. Hallahan (Wisbech Wheelers)	38.40

Retford and Dist Wh Paul Johnson Memorial 10 (Sutton on Trent, Notts):

1. Matt Sinclair (Lutterworth CC)	19.57
2. J. Layne (CC Ashwell)	20.28
3. D. Barnett (Drag2zero.com)	20.47
4. J. Ramsbottom (Pedal Pushers RT)	20.48
5. M. Dodson (Bolsover and Dist CC)	22.03
6. D. Sidwell (Lutterworth CC)	22.06
7. X. Scott (Bolsover and Dist CC)	22.11
8. R. Jelly (Mapperley CC)	22.12
9. A. Green (Lutterworth CC)	22.17
10. B. Seddon (Bolsover and Dist CC)	22.20
Team: Lutterworth Cycle Centre (Sinclair, Sidwell, Green)	1:04.20
Women: Karen Ledger.	
Veteran: Daniel Barnett.	

Ilkley CC 10 (Ilkley, Yorkshire):

1. Tejvan Pettinger (Sri Chinmoy CT)	23.50
2. H. King (Ilkley CC)	23.55
3. B. Jacobs (Alba Rosa CC)	24.57
4. B. Buss (Pedalsport CC)	25.22
5. G. Turnbull (Patron)	25.57
6. N. Allatt (Holmfirth CC)	26.15
7. A. Askwith (Bridlington CC)	26.46
8. R. Tuma (Alba Rosa CC)	26.48
9. A. Fold (PH-MAS Cycling)	27.17
10. M. Johnson (Yorkshire Road Club)	27.21
Women: Leanne Farrow (Ilkley CC)	32.48
Vet over 40: Glen Turnbull	
Vet over 50: Blair Buss	
Vet over 60: Richard Durham	

Saturday, March 14

A5 Rangers 31 (Towcester, Northants):

1. Matthew Bottrill (www.drag2zero.com)	1:07.25
2. A. Jackson (Team Swift)	1:12.11
3. L. Clarke (TMG Horizon)	1:13.37
4. D. Axford (Arctic Tacx RT)	1:13.42
5. S. Norman (Arbis Colbert RT)	1:14.13
6. D. Meade (Hinckley CRC)	1:16.30
7. S. Walker (MG Décor)	1:17.30
8. S. Wright (Planet X)	1:17.46
9. S. Wilson (Bonito Squadra Corsa)	1:18.29
10 G. Pymm (Team Zenith)	1:20.06
Team: 45 Road Club (Neil Barford 1:22.16, Alistair Shed 1:28.48)	
Derek Reeve Memorial Trophy: Stuart Wilson.	
Woman: Cath Weiss (Baines Racing)	1:34.41

Pendle Forest CC 27 (Circuit of Ingleborough, Yorkshire):

1. Tejvan Pettinger (Sri Chinmoy CT)	1:00.52
2. S. Bridge (Manchester Wheelers Club)	1:03.20
3. R. Bideau (Pendle Forest CC)	1:04.53
4. H. King (Ilkley CC)	1:04.54
5. A. Hartley (PH.MAS Cycling)	1:04.55
6. E. Farrow (Ilkley CC)	1:05.11
7. M. Haydock (North Lancs RC)	1:07.19
8. D. Hart (Ilkley CC)	1:07.21
9. M. Nulty (Glossop Kinder Velo)	1:07.25
10. D. Mullier (Harrogate Nova CC)	1:09.10
Veteran: Doug Hart	
Junior: Adam Hartley	
Woman: Rebecca Rimmington	

Altrincham Ravens CC 25 (Goostrey, Cheshire):

1. Mark Turnbull (TORQ Performance)	55.02
2. S. Burns (Manchester Wheelers)	55.11
3. M. Cuming (JLT Condor)	55.27
4. D. Maironis (Coveryourcar.co.uk RT)	55.35
5. B. Xavier Disley (RST Sport/Aero-Coach)	56.23
6. B. Charlton (Swinerton Cycles)	56.46
7. D. Jackson (Harry Middleton CC)	58.02
8. P. Warburton (Liverpool Phoenix CC)	58.40
9. J. Green (VC St Raphael)	59.04
10. A. Hughes (North Cheshire Clarion)	59.15
Tandem: Dave Fearon & Caroline Fearon (Weaver Valley CC)	1:01.40
Medium Gear: George Coghlan (Janus RC)	1:01.11

Barnesbury CC Hilly 21 (Blyth, Northumberland):

1. Carl Donaldson (GS Metro)	47.29
2. D. Gee (Teesdale CRC)	47.51
3. B. Metcalf (Team Swift)	48.26
4. M. Harrison (Houghton CC)	48.58
5. A. Wild (Tyneside Vagabonds CC)	49.18
6. B. Lane (GS Metro)	49.26
7. E. Gowland (Coalfields RT)	49.50
8. A. Ratsey (Breeze Bikes RT)	50.06
9. A. Hall (GS Metro)	50.10
10. G. Crammond (Tyne Tri)	50.22

The year's fastest

10 MILES

	Rider	Time	Course	Date
1	Matt Sinclair (Lutterworth Cycle Centre)	19.57	A10/21	15/03/15
2	J. Layne (CC Ashwell)	20.28	A10/21	15/03/15
3	David McGaw (Cambridge CC)	20.30	B10/19	08/03/15
=4	I. Smallwood (Cardiff Ajax)	20.34	R10/22A	08/03/15
=4	I. Smallwood (Cardiff Ajax)	20.34	R10/16A	14/03/15
6	R. Pears (Proccycling RT)	20.35	U375	15/02/15
7	J. Boyman (Farnham RC)	20.37	R10/22A	14/03/15
8	G. Moir (RNRMCA)	20.41	P140	08/03/15
9	D. Barnett (Drag2zero.com)	20.47	A10/21	15/03/15
10	J. Ramsbottom (Pedal Pushers RT)	20.48	A10/21	15/03/15

25 MILES

	Rider	Time	Course	Date
1	Rhys Howells (Richardson-Trek)	53.50	E1/25b	08/03/15
2	S. Norman (Arbis Colbert)	54.54	E1/25b	08/03/15
3	M. Turnbull (TORQ Performance)	55.02	J2/9	14/03/15
4	S. Burns (Manchester Wheelers)	55.11	J2/9	14/03/15
5	M. Cuming (JLT Condor)	55.27	J2/9	14/03/15
6	D. Maironis (Coveryourcar.co.uk)	55.35	J2/9	14/03/15
7	D. Robson (Cheltenham & Co CC)	55.56	U17	22/02/15
8	J. Layne (CC Ashwell)	56.10	E1/25b	08/03/15
9	J. Skipper (Rock Estate)	56.18	BS19	08/02/15
10	X. Disley (RST Sport Aero-Coach)	56.23	J2/9	14/03/15

Team:

GS Metro (Donaldson, Lane, Hall) 2:27.05

Women: Angela Hibbs (Team WattCycle) 51.25

Junior: Adam Wild

(Tyneside Vagabonds CC) 49.18

CC London 19 (Brookmans Park, Herts):

2-up: 1. Justin Garon & Jason Gurney (Arbis-Colbert Cycles RT) 42.54

2. J. Mckie & M. Antoniou (Regents Park Roulers) 43.59

3. G. Robinson & M. Ilic (Regents Park Roulers) 44.13

4. A. Morris & B. Pritchard (CC London) 46.24

5. W. Wallace & N. Vellacott (CC London) 46.34

6. A. Muir & A. Horner (Chester Rovers & Veloschils) 49.45

7. R. Abraham & P. Harvey (CC London) 49.53

8. J. Stevenson & S. Couzens (CC London) 52.30

9. R. Jewell & R. Raphael-Campbell (CC London) 52.48

10. A. Hawker & S. Hagan (CC London) 53.53

Solo: 1. Trevor Burke (Finchley Racing Team) 44.44

2. S. Torley (Team Milton Keynes) 46.45

3. M. Dossett (Welwyn Wheelers) 46.45

Malton Wheelers 10.5 (Sledmere, North Yorks):

1. Alastair Wareham (Team Swift) 24.02

2. B. Buss (Team Swift) 25.08

3. M Wolstenholme (Team Swift) 25.11

4. John Brearley (City RC (Hull)) 25.24

5. J. Wainman (Team Swift) 25.47

6. G. McIntosh (Alba Rosa CC) 25.52

7. S. Pickard (Scarborough Paragon CC) 26.01

8. K. Downes (Wilsons Wheels RT) 26.11

9. A. Askwith (Bridlington CC) 26.22

10. S. Guymer (Rapha CC) 26.29

Women: Louise Scupham (Scarborough Paragon CC) 29.11

Junior: Sam Case (Out of the Saddle CC) 29.07

Cardiff Ajax 10 (Llandaff, Cardiff):

1. Ioan Smallwood (Cardiff Ajax CC) 20.34

2. J. Beech (Ogmore Valley Wh) 21.35

3. P. Hayward (Cwmcarn Paragon RC) 21.56

4. C. Jones (Ride Bike Wales) 21.59

5. G. Boswell (Cardiff Ajax CC) 22.03

6. E. Powell (Pontypool RCC) 22.24

7. A. Touche (Cwmcarn Paragon RC) 22.31

8. C. Gibbard (Bynea CC) 22.36

9. E. Derrick (Bike Doctor) 22.50

10. C. Wallace (Merthyr CC) 22.52

Women: Claire Moir (Scuderia RT)

Veteran: Christopher Jones (Ride Bike Wales)

Women Vet: Andrea Parish (Camel Valley C&TC)

Junior: Alexandre Touche (Cwmcarn Paragon)

Women Juniors: Caitlin Sweet (Cardiff Ajax CC)

Sunday, March 8

Maidenhead and District CC 29.5 (Berks):

1. Jamie Pine (Pedal Heaven) 1:09.46

2. T. Allen (RP Racing) 1:14.38

3. L. Chaplin (RT 316) 1:14.39

4. T. Sefton (RP Racing) 1:15.03

5. O. Clark (RP Racing) 1:17.02

6. P. Tedbury (Mercedes AMG Petronas CC) .. 1:17.27

7. A. Payne (Maidenhead & District CC) 1:18.49

8. R. MacFadyen (Reading CC) 1:19.20

9. P. Oliver (Fairly United RT) 1:19.57

10. O. Dammone (Zappi's CC) 1:20.29

Junior: Tim Allen (RP Racing) 1:14.38

Trikes: Geoff Booker (Oxonian CC) 1:35.07

2-up: Paul Callinan & David Webborn (London Dynamo) 1:11.19

North Lancs RC Hilly 28 (Great Harwood, Lancs)

1. Mark Holton (www.drag2zero.com) 1:03.22

2. J. Findley (High on Bikes) 1:06.57

3. E. Farrow (Ilkley CC) 1:07.26

4. M. Haydock (North Lancs RC) 1:08.27

5. G. Butler (Preston Whls) 1:08.47

6. S. Ayers (VC Bradford) 1:09.23

7. D. Hart (Ilkley CC) 1:09.31

8. P. Julien (North Lancs RC) 1:11.36

9. P. Robinson (Janus RC) 1:12.31

10. D. Ebbrell (Blackburn & District CTC) 1:12.38

Veteran: Gethin Butler (Preston Wheelers)

Women: Molly Whittall (Buxton CC)

Team: Ilkley CC (Farrow, Hart, Milward)

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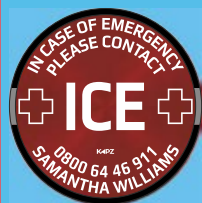


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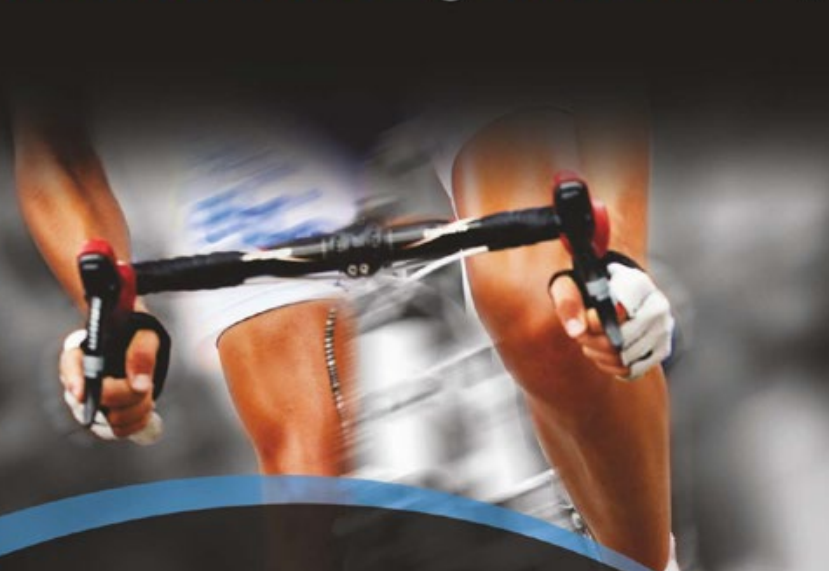


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There is an A-road through my village that is cycling hell. It's too narrow, it's too busy, it has too many lorries, and they go too fast.

Perhaps afflicted by lead poisoning or carbon monoxide or something, the local authority's highway engineers have gazed upon this road and decided that actually the problem is that it's not narrow enough, for they have installed numerous traffic islands (I think there are 14 in all) to make it thinner still. These islands have been carefully spaced to give a driver just long enough to pull level with a cyclist before they have to swerve into them, but not long enough to get past.

I have visions of the engineers concerned at a training course, looking in a perplexed manner at a video of a cyclist and muttering to each other, "Nah, that must be CGI. It's like a Segway with the

wheels the wrong way round. That's just not possible. What's that you say? Copenhag-what? That's not even a real place."

I was riding down this road recently when a truck pulled alongside. An island approached. The truck driver was clearly not going to blink first, because he was driving a truck and was essentially indestructible, and I was riding a bike and was destructible all the way through.

I swerved off the road and onto the shared foot/cycle path like a devious Belgian trying to get one over on Ian Stannard. "Hey! Geddo of the effing footpath!" shouted a woman wheeling a pram rather larger and heavier than the truck. "Effing cyclists!"

Thus it was that I was able to transition instantaneously from one bit of totally inadequate road infrastructure to another. And, of course, to enjoy the warm embrace of my fellow humans.

It's the shared paths that upset me most. I have a theory about shared-use footpaths. I believe that one day a highway engineer was driving to work in his Hummer (I assume his helicopter was in for a service) when it occurred to him that there was a lot of stuff out there on the other side of his windscreen that was slowing him down. If he could get rid of the roadworks, the lorries, the pedestrians, the bikes, the parked cars... if there were somewhere else they could go.... But where?

Survival of the luckiest

There was a meeting. The Freight Haulage Association and the Union



of Pneumatic Hammerers and Allied Trades lobbied hard enough to be allowed to stay. Pedestrians, cyclists and parked cars, being non-unionised, got shuffled onto the shared path. Or maybe we were just too feckless to turn up to the meeting. It would be so like us.

The shared path in the village is narrow, and has (I counted) 31 turnings crossing it. The choice between the road and the path amounts to whether you'd rather be run down by a lorry or T-boned by someone pulling out of a driveway — which would

Acts of Cycling Stupidity

I was at the BBC in Salford last week, and was reminded of the occasion last year when I saw someone try to take a bicycle through a revolving door there. It lasted for several minutes.

First he wheeled it straight in, and found that when he pushed the door it jammed on the back wheel. Then he tried rolling it in balanced on its back wheel, and discovered that there was no longer any space for him in the door with it unless he crouched below the handlebars, which he did. Unfortunately, he couldn't walk in this position. Then he put it in on its own, and tried to push it through. This wedged the door solidly in both directions.

The best bit was that right beside the revolving door was an ordinary door for wheelchair access — and for bikes.



“Road or path? Want to be killed by a lorry or an emerging car?”

presumably knock you into the road in front of the lorry anyway.

The irony of the tension on shared paths is that the reason pedestrians don't like having to share with us is because we're faster than them, more solid than

them, and it makes them feel vulnerable. Which are exactly the same reasons we don't like sharing the roads with cars and lorries. And the reason we don't like sharing with them is because we're never really sure what they are likely to do next. Which is what a lot of drivers say about us.

Anyway, the logical conclusion of all this is that we're never going to get along, death lurks round every corner, and we're all doomed.

Next week: my friend Bernard buys a kitten.

HUTCH'S SHORTCUTS

NaHCO₃

An exciting chemical, which is safe, appears to improve cycling performance, isn't banned, and is, in fact, just sodium bicarbonate. Cake may slow you down, but that doesn't mean some of the ingredients might not speed you up.

The idea is that sodium bicarbonate buffers the acidity produced in the muscles under intense exercise. Track riders have used it almost since the invention of track riding. Bear in mind, of course, that track riders are much, much better placed for arrangements lavatorial than road riders.

This is highly relevant, for if bicarb might make you go faster on a bike, it will very probably make you go faster in a much more basic sense. It can cause explosive diarrhoea. One former national 4,000m-pursuit champion described the effect as, “My bottom turned into a fire-hose.”

And as if this wasn't enough, if taken in solution, as is the usual method, it tastes like sea-water. Don't try to kill the taste by mixing it with fruit juice — this produces a chemical reaction that will fill your kitchen from ceiling to floor with orange-flavoured foam. (If you're 10 years old, of course, knock yourself out.) It will also constitute several days' worth of the maximum recommended intake of sodium.

But it might just give you the bit extra you need to win a sprint against your mates.

About 0.3g per kilo of body weight, about an hour before exercise. You probably want to eat something with it, to reduce the odds of that whole fire-hose thing.





One vision: Oakley has cornered the eyewear market

Oakley Factory Pilot Eyeshades

Simon Smythe looks back at the sunglasses that changed the face of professional cycling

Before the 1980s cyclists didn't really wear sunglasses. They had stopped wearing Biggles-style flying goggles some time around 1950 when the last of the unmade mountain passes was paved over. After that a select few occasionally wore aviators: Fausto Coppi was able to pull off the matinee idol look, and they lent Bernard Hinault a certain *Taxi Driver*-style menace, but the rest of the peloton went largely unglassed.

But then something came along that would literally change the face of cycling.

Brash, blond American Greg LeMond was already known for not toeing the Euro-pro line, and then in late 1984 he was approached by a small Californian company with a pre-production prototype

pair of what would later become Oakley Factory Pilot Eyeshades.

LeMond, whose attitude was 'if they tell me I can't do it I'm going to prove I damn well can', instantly loved them.

"Most cyclists wouldn't even have considered it. They would have been like, it will look too crazy," LeMond told *Canadian Cycling* magazine.

But LeMond, who was always a rebel with a cause, could see that they would be not only useful for upsetting the status quo, but also useful for racing, where protecting the eyes from dust and debris should have been a priority.

Unobtainium

Oakley founder Jim Jannard had started out in 1975 selling motocross handlebar

grips made from a patented sticky material called Unobtainium that moulded to the shape of the rider's hand. Then Jannard moved into producing ski goggles. The Eyeshades were his first sports glasses — very much resembling his ski goggles with their large single lens made from a tough, tinted polycarbonate, using Unobtainium ear grippers to keep them in place — and were like nothing ever before seen in the conservative European pro peloton.

So LeMond's father, who was also his agent, negotiated a contract with Oakley and in 1985 Greg went racing with an oversized piece of brightly coloured plastic attached to his face.

Serious money

Predictably, the establishment hated it. One of the supposed issues was that the viewing public would no longer be able to see the rider's expression. Another was that they looked plain ridiculous in the serious sport of cycling.

The following year the Australian rider Phil Anderson, who trained with LeMond in Sacramento, California, was also approached by Oakley. LeMond's father negotiated a contract for him too.

And then every cyclist, pro and amateur, wanted a pair.

In 2007 Jannard sold Oakley for \$2.1 billion and he now owns two Fijian islands.

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Dorking, Surrey
Sunday 29th March

Dartmoor Demon

Exeter Racecourse, Devon
Saturday 2nd May

South Downs Spring

Plumpton Racecourse, Sussex
Sunday 17th May

The Arrow

Market Rasen Racecourse, Lincolnshire
Sunday 31st May

Ripon Revolution

Ripon Racecourse, Yorkshire
Sunday 28th June

Suffolk Spinner NEW

Ipswich, Suffolk
Sunday 19th July

Malvern Mad Hatter

Three Counties Showground, Worcestershire
Sunday 23rd August

Welsh Raider

Ludlow Racecourse, Shropshire
Saturday 3rd October

Box Hill Original

Dorking, Surrey
Sunday 11th October

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